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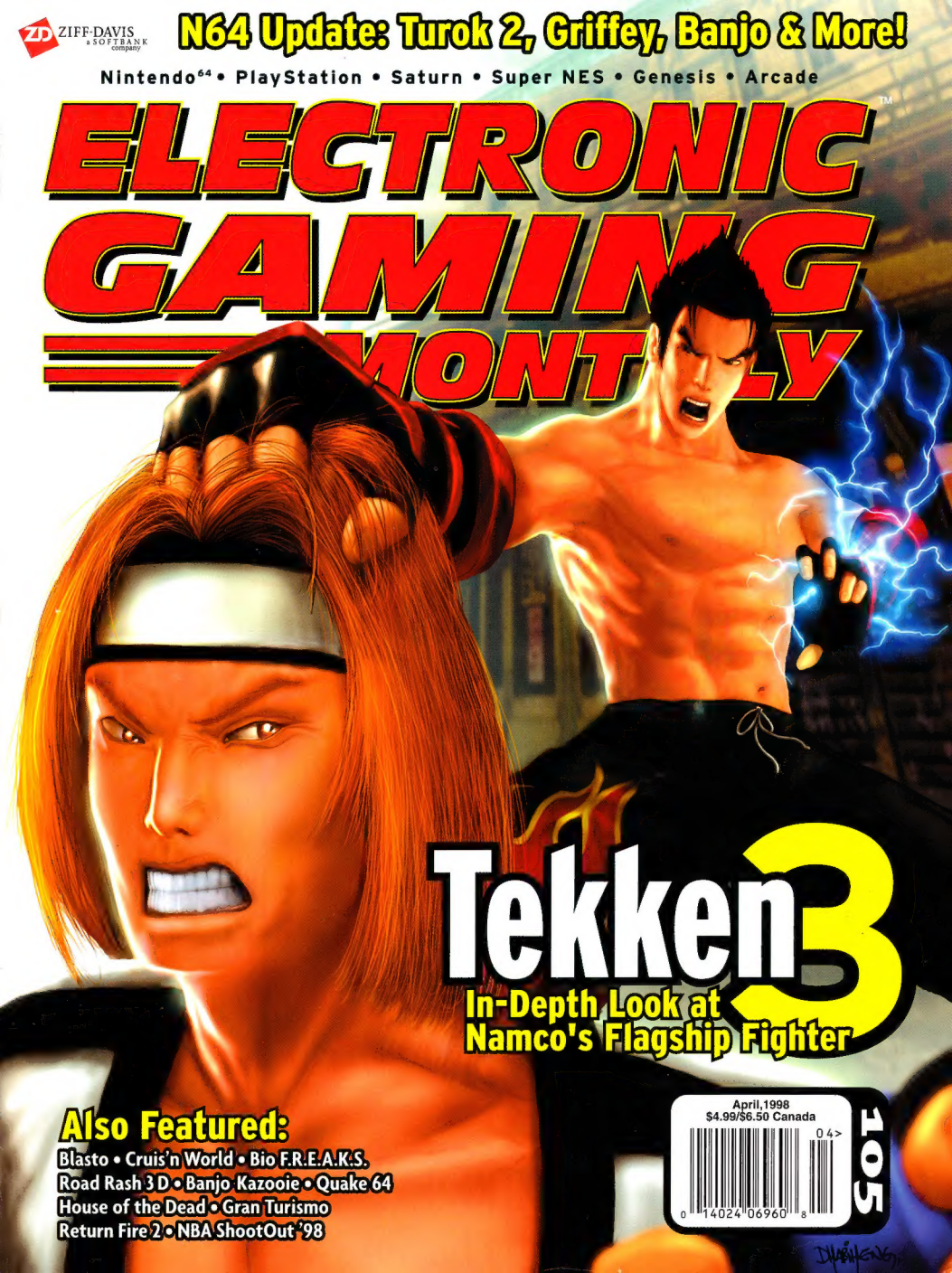

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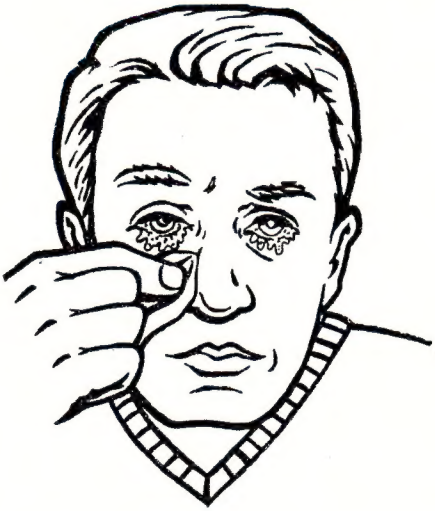

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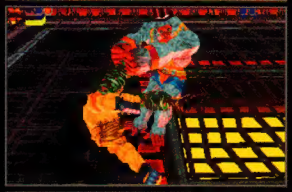

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Editorial

By Dan Hsu • dan_hsu@zd.com

In last month's editorial and in recent special features (Back to the Future—issue #103 and Video Game Timeline—issue #104) we took a brief trip back in time and revisited famous moments in video-game history. But what does the future have in store for us?

One of the most eagerly awaited games in quite a while is the upcoming Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time (as it is called in Japan...we'll call it Zelda 64 for now). A lot of us can't help but get excited at the thought of playing a Zelda game on the Nintendo 64. Who could blame us? It's the latest chapter in the long-running series that has captured the hearts of countless gamers. How about a real 32-/64-Bit Sonic game or a Metroid 64? The thought of these hypothetical games is enough to make us drool with anticipation.

Something, however, is the matter here. All of the titles I mentioned are sure to be big hits (with good reason), but is that all the industry can throw at us gamers to get us excited: sequels and rehashes? I'm worried that it might be.

Programmers have settled into a Laz-E-Boy of complacency. They take yesteryear's hits and pump them up with new graphics and sounds, stick in a few new features, and ship them off to the stores. It's the easy thing to do: Game designers can skip racking their brains for original concepts and simply improve upon documented hits.

Hey, I'm not complaining (well, I am complaining, but hear me out). I love Super Mario 64 for the Nintendo 64. I love Castlevania: Symphony of the Night for the PlayStation. I love Saturn Bomberman for the Saturn. These games are absolutely incredible. But wouldn't you agree with me that they aren't really original? Super Mario 64 is incredible, but it is exactly what I'd expect a Mario game to look like in 3-D. Symphony contains pretty much the same gameplay that every previous Castlevania offered. Saturn Bomberman is the best Bomberman game out there—because it gives us more of the same. These games are all great, but they're all modern updates of past successes.

I do miss the old days—the days when I'd be playing a new and revolutionary game for the first time. I'd be sitting there, amazed as hell at what I was playing. If you were anything like me, you were giddy with excitement when you first played Super Mario Bros. (I still remember thinking how awesome the game was, with its excellent control and plethora of secrets). Same with Intellivision's NFL Football (with the first-ever playbook), Zelda (a magical action-RPG like nothing seen before) and Tetris (do I even need to say why?). Remember seeing Street Fighter II in the arcade and witnessing Honda's 100-Hand Slap or Dhalsim's Fireball for the first time? (OK, so SFII is a sequel, but you gotta admit, you've never seen anything like it before.) I remember. I remember playing these games, wide-eyed and jaw-dropped, thinking that whoever made these games were true geniuses.

So I'm sitting here today, playing a great Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha, but my mind fondly wanders off. I think back to my college days when I threw my first Sonic Boom, and I wonder, "Am I ever going to be amazed again?"

Are all the good and original ideas taken up? Let's hope not. While I'm sure I'll have fun playing the next Mario or Sonic game, I'll eagerly await the next fresh concept that's not based on an older one. Who knows what will be the next game that cannot be classified as a Doom-clone, head-to-head fighter or yearly sports game update? We get a few standouts once in a while, like the entertaining PaRappa the Rapper and Monster Rancher, but these games are too few and far between. We need some innovative game designers to come up with some innovative ideas. We need someone to pleasantly shock and surprise us again.

Is anyone out there up to the challenge?

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Cover art by: Peter Franco

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Want the scoop on NFL Blitz? Then turn to page 106 for the info, baby.

Calling All Poor Losers

Nowadays, being a sore loser is more than an affliction—it's an art form. Our poor-losers' guide to gaming starts on page 88.

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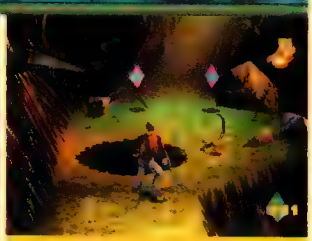

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egm letters

Compiled by: Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Psycho Letter of the Month

Now That's Dedication

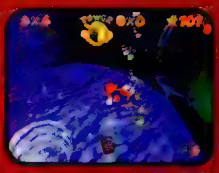
To the staff and personnel at *EGM*,

I am writing to inform everyone about a close personal friend of mine, Belnar Jones, and his love for video games. Well, Belnar recently had the power to his apartment turned off by his landlord. This is because of Belnar's communist beliefs that he shouldn't have to pay for housing. The landlord was trying to flush him out of the apartment because Belnar locked his doors, boarded up his windows, and cut off communication to everyone except me.

Anyway, Belnar, being quite fond of video games, tried to conduct electricity using a bucket of paint thinner and lemon juice, aluminum foil and copper wire, which he connected to his tongue and then to his television and N64 system. I didn't think it would work, but Belnar was able to play Super Mario 64 for a good 10 minutes before I had to rush him to the hospital because of the skin discoloration and loss of bodily hair that he had suffered.

All hail Belnar, a true patriot to the video game world.

Sir Orville of Camelot
"A Knight of the Round Table"
(one of the lesser knights)



A few people are still wanting us to bring back Psycho Letter of the Month. Last year, we had all pretty much agreed to leave that horrible part of our past behind us.

But we just had an idea. Since we gave a Psycho Letter of the Month award to Captain Caizone last April (1997), we're going to continue recognizing psychotics for each April issue (in recognition of April Fools'). This will be a new *EGM* tradition...at least until we're bored with the idea. So at the beginning of each year, please feel free to send us some wacky letters (yeah, like you aren't already doing it all year long). Our favorite letter will win a controller in the April issue, and the writer will gain fame and recognition beyond belief.

We wish Belnar well.

Congratulations. You win an InterAct controller. You will be receiving a Barracuda (PS), an Eclipse Stick (SA), or a SharkPad Pro 64 (N64).

EGM Letters gives you the chance to praise, gripe, ask, speculate or simply reflect. *EGM* will discuss some of today's top issues in the video game industry. If you have a subscription inquiry or problem, please contact our subscription department at (303) 665-8930 or by going to: http://subscribe.egmmag.com/service on the Web. Writing the editorial staff about your subscription concerns is futile! Note: *EGM* cannot and will not personally respond to any letters. We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. You can reach *EGM* by writing to:

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Looking For Gals

I am an adult female gamer who has been playing video games ever since I was able to convince my mother that an Atari was necessary for my survival. Several years and dozens of gaming consoles later, my enjoyment with a good challenge is still going strong. I have been reading your magazine for quite some time and have noticed a number of female gamers writing in with concerns about gender roles in video games. I know that women are a rapidly growing segment of the gaming population. A suggestion: You need a female reviewer on staff.

I read your magazine with much enjoyment, but I am often surprised at how often the opinions and top picks of your reviewers differ so greatly from my own, and many female gamers I know. Not usually on general issues, but it seems that women, aesthetically, look for different things in games than men. I believe that if you were to hire a female reviewer, not only would it add perspective, but it would create more interest for the growing group of females who enjoy gaming, not to mention reading *EGM*.

J. Lacey Gray—110017.442@compuserve.com

Truth of the matter is, hardly any women have applied to *EGM* for a writing position. But no one's stopping you from trying. If you gals think you have what it takes (in other words, you can write good...um, I mean *well*, kick ass in video games and work erratic hours), then send in a résumé, a cover letter and a few writing samples (500-word previews and 250-word reviews of popular games) to:

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Lombard, IL 60148

We're not necessarily hiring right now, but you never know. Some of the staff members got their job just from sending in writing samples; *EGM* wasn't even looking for people at the time.

Ass Grabbin'

I am glad your staff denounces homophobia. Nevertheless, I think page 9 of issue #103 goes a little too far (with the nerdy dude and his grabbing hands). It would comfort me to know that my interpretation is mistaken, but if it were intended to be interpreted as I interpreted it, why, of all things, did you guys put that there?

tmohan@ibm.net

"Sup wit" page 9 of issue #103? Why is the guy in the green shirt touching that other guy's ass?? Sure, NBA Jam was fun, but not that fun.

lordaction@hotmail.com

It's not as bad as you think. Read on...

It's apparent that on page 9 of issue #103, Crispin Boyer has been reproduced many times over, each with a different look. After close inspection, you'll notice all five guys have the same height and the same build. This has been another conspiracy foiled by...

Ed Price—Anaheim, CA

Thanks for noticing. We simply had a little fun with multiple photographs of Crispin. We would never promote grabbing someone's ass while they were playing an arcade game. That's just asking for an ass-kickin'.

Differentiating Between 2-D and 3-D

I recently read your Review Crew section in issue #103, and I saw some misinformation provided by some of your reviewers. Check out Bomberman 64—the review was wrong. Shawn needs to play the game before he reviews it. He said the Multiplayer Mode is 3-D and that makes it "not all that great." The Multiplayer

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egm letters

Mode is 2-D, Shawn. Try playing it instead of watching the advertisements. Oh yeah, I don't know if Dan was all there either.

Mike Neace—Richmond, KY

Let's see. You say Bomberman 64's Multiplayer Mode isn't 3-D? The same Bomberman 64 Multiplayer Mode that has stages with different heights? The same stages where you can throw bombs from higher altitudes? The same stages where you can climb up and down stairs? Yeah, we guess you're right. That doesn't sound 3-D at all.

Evil Gross Magazine

My son John has been receiving your magazine for 12 months now. I want to explain a concern that I have with your magazine. John is a teenager. He likes your magazine. The problem is the offensive pictures you draw of women. They are too explicit, and they unrealistically portray the female body. Every time your magazine arrives, I take a felt tip pen and color "clothes" on the women.

Please realize that your cartooning is considered pornographic to me and that I want to protect my son from this kind of artwork. John enjoys your magazine, and I do not want to cancel the subscription. I want you to be more sensitive to your young reading audience. John buys your magazine because of the information in it. It is not necessary to expose him to the filth of pornography.

I know that if I am of this mind set, many other people are as well. As I said, I do not want to cancel the subscription, but I must protect my son. Please change your drawings; women are not toys.

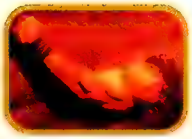
Bonita Grabinski—Tacoma, WA

Please cancel my subscription immediately. As a mother of a 12- and 13-year-old, I am appalled at the gross and sexually revolting advertisements you have allowed on the pages of your publication. You should consider changing your name to *EGM: Evil Gross Magazine*. In recent issues, I have seen themes of Satan worship, sexual bondage and just plain violence! The straw that broke the camel's back was the Spawn ad with the guy's arm ripped off. If you guys are looking for shock value, you just succeeded in shocking yourself right out of a subscriber.

Just for your information, I have shared this knowledge with all the parents and school officials I know. You are sick. You are appealing to a young, preteen audience, and you should be ashamed of yourself for exposing young minds to images so extremely violent, sexual and evil.

Sharon Stewart—Flora, MS

While we wouldn't go as far as to say that *EGM* is pornographic or evil, we do understand your concern as a parent. We certainly appreciate you watching out for your children. We try to keep an eye out for some overly offensive ads (believe it or not, we have turned away a few ads that were deemed too explicit). But if you don't want your kids reading *EGM*, well then, that's your call.



Ewww...this picture from the Spawn ad is evil gross.

We are well aware of our younger readers, but please keep in mind that *EGM* is read by a predominantly older audience (our average reader is 24 years old, according to marketing studies). We also feel that our magazine is pretty tame compared to the stuff you can see on TV or read in the paper. We feel our readers are mature enough to handle a busty (computer-rendered, mind you) Lara Croft when *Baywatch* babes are strutting the real stuff on television. Well, OK, maybe not entirely "real"...

We asked our resident artist Shawn Smith to draw up a conservative Lara Croft...maybe something in a Catholic school girl outfit—you know, nice and conservative. Check out his handiwork on page 18.

Desperate

If I send you guys 1,000 messages a month for the rest of my life, I wonder what the odds are that one of them will get printed. Please let me know what my chances are—a statistical breakdown would be nice.

jenyart@thomas.butler.edu

The only way to prevent me from sending 10,000 letters a month is to publish one of them. I am desperate to see my name printed or my letter considered for "Psycho Letter of the Month" (oops, that's in the past!). If you print my letter, then I'll ease down a little (maybe 500 letters a month). PLEEEAAASSEEE?!

Dave89820@aol.com

Nope. Absolutely not. Your futile attempts at getting your letters printed will not work on us. We...um...er...

D'OH!

EGM: Fair To All Sexes

I've noticed that there have been a lot of letters sent to you concerning sexism in your magazine. Well, if the writers of these letters would care to read issue #104, they would be in for a big surprise. I counted at least 15 naked Yoshis in that magazine, not including the one on the cover! I may not be an expert on anatomy, but I'm quite sure those Yoshis were male! So please, stop complaining!

BlairPars@aol.com

We just don't get it. How can our female readers complain about the lack of scantily clad males? We have WCW's Giant (see last issue's Letters section) and now, an orgy of nude Yoshis. What more could you possibly want from us?

Question of the Moment

What are your thoughts on the big chains discontinuing Saturn products?

It's unfair to all the Saturn gamers, who already have a hard enough time finding games.
sclan3@juno.com

It's a good decision. They need to make room for Dural.
Segalcon@aol.com

It sucks. The Saturn is just as good as the PlayStation and is better than the N64. Sega just has bad management.
Franky888@aol.com

Looks like no sign of life on Planet Saturn. Smart move.
AlecTronik@aol.com

Stores do what they have to do in order to make a living. If oranges don't sell as well as apples, then why not bring them down in price to get rid of them before they rot?
Dogballs@aol.com

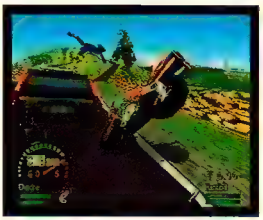
If SoA's management had a brain to market games like Grandia in the U.S., this wouldn't be happening, would it? Could you imagine Grandia commercials that use the same technique Sony used with FFVII?
GhaleonOne@aol.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment: What do you think Sega needs to do to make their next system a success?
Send your short, but sweet, responses to: EGM_Mail@zd.com with the subject heading: **"SEGA!"**

The ROAD RASH® Blood Drive

"JOIN US IN THE RACE TO GIVE BLOOD."

Peter Plasma



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"Hemoglobin please."

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egm letters

PaRappa Sucks

I think the fact that PaRappa got best mascot in the Editors' Choice Awards [issue #104] really sucks! Crash also shouldn't have gotten mentioned at all. Crash also sucks! Sonic should have gotten best mascot!

jschmalzried@hotmail.com

Oh yeah? Well PaRappa thinks *you* suck.*

This is not considered an April Fools "gag"

***Legal disclaimer:** Anything PaRappa says or appears to say in the pages of *Electronic Gaming Monthly* is not sponsored, authorized nor otherwise endorsed by Sony Computer Entertainment America.

"10"

When was the last time the Review Crew gave a perfect "10" to a game? If memory serves me right, the last game to get a "10" was Final Fantasy III.

Allen Ragasa—Ranma1269@webtv.net

Nope. FF3 scored straight 9's. The last game to get a 10 was Sonic & Knuckles for the Genesis [December 1994, issue #65]. The month before that, Donkey Kong Country (Super NES) scored a 10. Both perfect ratings were given by Ed Semrad, former *EGM* editor in chief.

It's been over three years since the tough-as-nails Review Crew has handed out a perfect score. The current Crew is the toughest yet. Who knows what it'll take to impress them that much.

Here's A Story...

As I was reading the Video Game Timeline [issue #102], a vision slowly but surely formed in my mind. The video game industry for the past five or 10 years can be seen as the Brady Bunch.

Atari is Jan Brady. We can look at Atari's record and see whiny lawsuits and pointless attempts at industrial sabotage. They just can't stop screaming, "Marsha! Marsha! Marsha!" They've always got some zany plan or crazy plot to get rid of that darn Nintendo and put themselves on top.

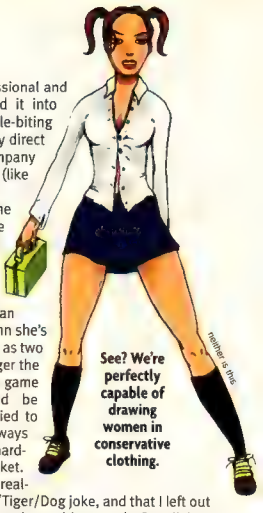
Of course, this means that Nintendo is Marsha. Pretty, but far too often empty. Nintendo and Sega could have been the parents of the video game industry, as they showed us through the 8- and 16-Bit years, but with their spats and backstabbing, they showed they were no Mike and Carol Brady.

This would mean that Sega is Peter. Every time you think Peter's geared up for something big... BAM! His voice cracks. "Duh, gee, should we support this here new chunk of hardware that people have put down $200 for? Nah."

Sony is, of course, Greg—so professional and cool. Sony's taken [crap] and turned it into lemonade. They've done some ankle-biting commercials, but they've not done any direct acts of sabotage against another company (like Atari has) or against themselves (like Sega continually does).

Where does this lead the rest of the family? I figure Tiger Electronics is like Bobby. Recently the actor who played Bobby got into a wreck for drunk driving and was arrested. He's a fat, ugly slob these days. I doubt the Game.Com has any better a fate than poor ol' Bobby. NEC is Alice cause damn she's not much to look at, but she's as tough as two Jan Renos put together! This leaves Tiger the Dog (not to be confused with Tiger the game company). Tiger (the dog) would be Panasonic cause they've tried and tried to get into the gaming industry, and always failed. $100 million for a chunk of hardware no one will ever see on the market. What a bunch of losers! Yeah, yeah, I realize that I passed up a really easy Alice/Tiger/Dog joke, and that I left out Cindy. Cindy got married to a porn star and now drives trucks for a living, so I really couldn't think of much to stick there. Bite me.

stofkillers@earthlink.net



See? We're perfectly capable of drawing women in conservative clothing.

Toolbox is fine.

OK. We realize this letter only makes about 10 percent sense, but it made us laugh. We thought we'd share Stofkillers' sickness with the rest of the world.

OOPS

Last issue, we said we'd have a role-playing-game feature for you this month. At the last minute, we decided to hold back the story to get in the most up-to-date information on some hot new games (which we're getting in too late to include in this issue). We apologize for the delay, but we're sure you'll be happy when you see what we have in store for you next month. If you're an RPG fan, don't miss out on this exclusive feature next issue.

in fact, nothing in EGM Letters should ever be considered a "gag." This is a very serious section, folks.

Letter Art

Where creativity, your favorite video game and a stamp can make you immortal!*

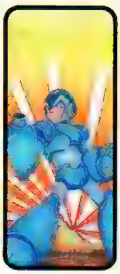
WINNER

Hector Thillet
Hollywood, FL

Congratulations, your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.

Close, but no controller

Christopher Stevens
Greenville, NC



Rick Baker
Ravendale, CA

Cesar Tafoya
El Paso, TX

*Or at least get your name and work in the magazine and win yourself a great prize (FIRST PLACE ONLY!).

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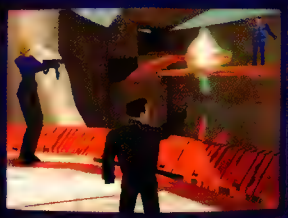
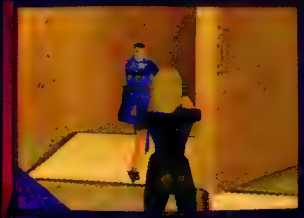
"SegaSoft's Quake killer."





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By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@zd.com

Fast, Cheap and Out of Control

Out of nowhere comes Project X, setting the tone early for the next wave of consoles

Throughout the past few months, VM Labs' Project X hardware has been the target of a lot of speculation, rumor and wonder. At the Winter CES in Las Vegas this past January, we were given a firsthand look at the hardware behind closed doors, and are now able to share some of the details with you. There's much more to the story, which *EGM* will be sharing with you in the coming months.

First of all, Project X is a new video game system in the broadest sense of the word. Project X hardware will be manufactured by a handful of Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs). VM Labs' partners are top consumer electronics companies and household names, however specific names cannot be revealed at this time.

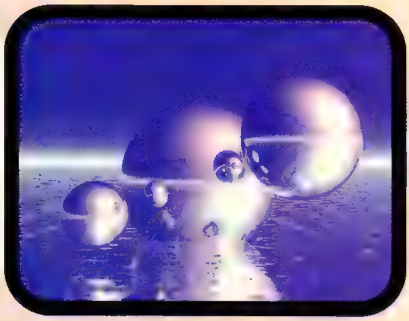
One of the biggest features of the system is that it is capable of incorporating many next-generation graphics rendering algorithms into video games. The polygonal standard which has been so prevalent in the current generation of video games will continue with Project X, but during the demonstrations we were shown, there was literally no sign of the characteristics usually associated with them—no breakup and no sharp edges anywhere in sight.

The founding members of VM Labs set their sights on the future of interactive entertainment.

For example, one of the demos shown at the Winter CES was of a dancer created by AnimaTek, dancing around using the system's real-time voxel-rendering capability. Not only is it fast, but the character moves in smooth motions, with zero sharp edges. This same AnimaTek demo, running on a PlayStation, would run at approximately two frames per second. The possibility of games with characters looking as good as those rendered FMV intros on the PlayStation and the Saturn is certainly an amazing proposition. Imagine Resident Evil with characters and zombies that look as good as the rendered intro, or even a Tekken or Toshinden-like fighting game with smoothly rendered fighters and arenas.

Next, we saw a demo of the Mandelbrodt set (fractals) calculated and rendered in real time which could be zoomed in and out, transparently recalculating each move. They had one demo with all of these demos and a live video feed all textured onto rotating cubes. One side of the cubes was a mirror, which showed the reflections of other cubes while each were moving in different directions.

VM Labs had two game demos up and running at the show as well. In two days, one of VM Labs' programmers ported the source code to Doom to the system, using only 15 percent of the system's power, outputting to an RGB buffer and then converting to their own internal format before display on a TV monitor, completely unoptimized. While a tad unpolished, the code was playable. Doom will never actually be released for the system, but it shows that the system can handle PC ports easily and quickly. Multiplayer Internet gaming and Net surfing are also possible via Project X's Modem.



Recent reports state that Project X may have real-time ray-tracing capabilities. Above (not from Project X) is an example of ray tracing.

Next was a demo of Jeff Minter's latest game, the name of which will be familiar to fans of his previous work. The game shows off some of the new types of rendering effects capable thus far only with Project X.

The one web we were shown moved in a smooth, wave-like motion with plenty of baddies on the screen at a time. We were also told that Minter may be working on an updated version of his Virtual Light Machine, which originally appeared on the Jaguar CD for the Project X.

Audio specs include a 32-Voice Wavetable synthesizer, with a smorgasbord of audio effects. All of this means a whole lot more tools available right off the bat to developers supporting Project X. There have recently been reports within the media that the machine may include real-time ray-tracing capabilities, a technique which is not possible with any speed on the current crop of PCs and consoles. Another

Tale of Three Tournaments

Celebrities and NFL Players Square Off on EA and Sony Football Games

The Super Bowl is well-known (and sometimes criticized) for the two full weeks of hype preceding the event, and Electronic Arts and Sony were more than happy to join in the festivities engulfing San Diego. In previous Super Bowls, Electronic Arts had a monopoly on pre-game tournaments with its long-running annual Madden Bowl, but times have changed, and that is no longer the case. The marketplace has shifted a bit in the last few years, and with the strong emergence of NFL GameDay comes Sony's very own contests. Besides, who says there isn't room for a little more hype preceding the world's most watched event?

The tale of three tournaments started at Planet Hollywood in downtown San Diego. Held on the Thursday before the Super Bowl, Electronic Arts' Madden Bowl 98 was presented with panache. Thirty-two participants, comprised of NFL players and entertainers, squared off in a playoff-style tournament. High-profile players such as running backs Garrison Hearst and Herschel Walker were eliminated along with performers such as Coolio, setting up a showdown between finalists Kevin Mitchell (TE, New Orleans Saints) and actor Morris Chestnut (*Boyz N the Hood*). Mitchell, trailing for most of the game, rallied late to take a 37-34 lead with less than a minute left. Chestnut received the ball, then completed a dramatic 80-yard touchdown reception to win the game 41-37 in grand fashion. It marked the first time an entertainer emerged victorious in the Madden Bowl.

Surprisingly, the winner of Madden Bowl '98 wasn't an NFL player, but rather an actor by the name of Morris Chestnut.

Not to be upstaged, Sony held two separate events before the Super Bowl. Perhaps symbolic of the rivalry between the two football games, Sony's first event was held the same day and time as the Madden Bowl. It consisted of a compelling showdown between Super Bowl participants Robert Brooks (WR, Green Bay Packers) and Terrell Davis (RB, Denver Broncos, later to be named Super Bowl MVP). Entitled "The Game Before the Game," the event proved to be eerily prophetic, as Terrell Davis handily beat NFL GameDay 98 spokesperson Robert Brooks by a score of 20-0.

Next, Sony held "The Locker Room Challenge" on the eve of the Super Bowl at a stage situated inside the PlayStation NFL Players Party at Embarcadero Park. Sixteen NFL players participated, including Garrison Hearst (amusingly, he attended both EA and Sony's tournaments), Hardy Nickerson and Terrell Owens, and GameDay 98 spokesperson Eddie George. Using quick games that normally only gave each player one possession a piece, the field of players gave way to Bob Whitfield (OL, Atlanta Falcons) and Edgar Bennett (RB, Green Bay Packers), who might have had a little more time to practice due to his season-ending ACL knee injury.

Showing loyalty to their teams, each player used the club he played for in real life. The game was scoreless throughout the contest and was finally decided at the end in dramatic fashion by a late field goal by Edgar Bennett to win the game by a score of 3-0. Whitfield even went so far as to call a timeout before the decisive kick in a last-ditch effort to "ice" Bennett, but obviously the ploy didn't succeed.

www.easports.com
www.playstation.com

Packers' running back Edgar Bennett boasts his trophy won at Sony's Locker Room Challenge.

rumor has the machine utilizing DVD, which would give the machine a considerable amount of power.

From what we saw at CES, we were very excited about the machine's possibilities. Currently, VM Labs is getting development systems out to interested parties. At press time, that was about a dozen different companies. As word of the system grows, hopefully that number will grow. The company is projecting that the first Project X systems will show up on store shelves in late 1998, along with at least a half dozen games.

The only question that remains is: Will big-name developers support the machine? VM Labs hasn't yet revealed the list of companies that are working on games. But, it's hard to imagine with a system this powerful, that companies wouldn't want to work on games for it. At the right price, with the right software developers, Project X could be what the next generation of video game consoles is all about.

www.vmlabs.com

Shutting Off the Power

Namco may pull the plug on several of their mall-based arcades

Namco Cybertainment, the arm of Namco Hometek Inc. that operates over 370 mall-based arcades in the U.S., may seek protection under Federal Bankruptcy statutes, according to the group's president, Kevin Hayes.

Citing "declining mall traffic" at its arcade locations, Hayes confirmed reports currently circulating in the industry that during recent lease negotiations, Namco Cybertainment has repeatedly informed mall owners that if terms favorable to Namco are not offered the company would seek Federal Bankruptcy protection.

"We're out there telling landlords times have been better in arcades," Hayes said. Should the company in fact seek reorganization protection under Chapter 11 of the Federal Bankruptcy statutes, it would put Namco Cybertainment in a more favorable position to seek reduced or same-cost lease agreements with mall owners—and would also allow the company to shed itself of current lease obligations far more easily (and cheaply) than otherwise.

www.namco.com

Tidbits...

30 Million PS, 5 Million FFVII

Sony announced that as of the end of January, 30 million PlayStations have been shipped worldwide. The breakdown is 10.65 million units shipped in Japan, 10.75 million in North America and 8.6 million in Europe. Additionally, it was revealed that Final Fantasy VII has sold 5 million copies worldwide, an amazing feat for an RPG. The jump to the 5 million mark is attributed to the game's release in Europe in November.

Favre Signs to QBC '99

Acclaim has signed Green Bay Packers QB Brett Favre to be the spokesman for the company's '99 installment of Quarterback Club, which will be released this fall. He will again contribute to the game's development and appear on the packaging.

"From his input into the development of the game to his appearance in the TV spot, Brett brought out the best in everyone on the Acclaim Sports team," said Bob Picunko, Acclaim Sports marketing director. "It's an honor to be working with Brett again."

Bugs Takes Over Games

Bugs Bunny and his pals are set to return to the video game screen in five different games between the Nintendo 64, the PlayStation and Sega's next console. Under a recently signed agreement with Warner Bros., French software developer Infogrames will develop the games, starring many of the most popular Looney Tunes characters. More than 250 Looney Tunes characters are covered under the agreement.

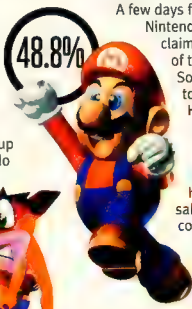
Kings of the Video Game Hill

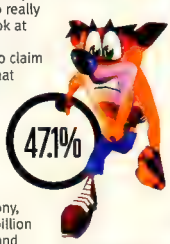
Depending on who you ask, Nintendo and Sony both won 1997

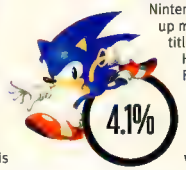
Any way you look at it, 1997 was an outstanding year for the video game industry. Nintendo and Sony went for the throat at retail—with only one major hardware price drop (in March '97 from both Sony and Nintendo) during the year. For the first time, the price of software made more of a difference than the price of hardware. Sega, on the other hand, dropped out of site, keeping only their current Saturn fan base happy with a steady stream of games.

But the real question is, who ended up on top in 1997? Both Sony and Nintendo claimed victory, but to really judge, you have to look at each company's line.

Sony was the first to claim victory, announcing that they sold an unprecedented 3.8 million PlayStation units during the fourth quarter, bringing total U.S. hardware sales to 8.7 million units. According to Sony, they racked up $2.4 billion in retail sales in '97, and SCEA execs were eager to boast about their success. During a media conference call, SCEA's CEO Kaz Hirai told those on the line that the "PlayStation is not only the dominant leader in North America, but is the undisputed system of choice worldwide...we're continuing to increase the gap between ourselves and our nearest competition."







Source: Nintendo

A few days following Sony's announcement, Nintendo announced their own statistics, claiming to have captured 48.8 percent of the 32-/64-Bit console market, with Sony at 47.1 percent and Sega clinging to 4.1 percent. Nintendo Chairman Howard Lincoln said that '97 was "the best year we've had, and that was in spite of product delays."

Nintendo's weak point is definitely delays. Slamming this point home, Jack Tretton, vice president of sales for SCEA said, "One of the key contributing factors to [our] success has been our ability to deliver the hits, as promised and on time."

So who won? Sony's hardware sales are impressive—2.4 million units in December alone. But Nintendo is also correct, racking up multiple million-selling titles during the year. Hard to compare? Yes. From a hardware-only standpoint, Sony's at the top. In software, Nintendo wins. Rest assured the competition will continue through 1998.

There's Never Enough Bass In Space

EGM checks in with the dynamic duo of funk, ToeJam & Earl, after a long absence

During the Sega Genesis' heyday in 1991, there was a little game called ToeJam & Earl. Many who were into gaming at the time fondly remember the duo of funk's adventures as one of the best two-player games at the time. The first ToeJam & Earl game was released in October 1991, followed up in 1993 with a sequel, Panic on Funkotron. Funkotron didn't get the attention the first game did (they're very different games), and Sega neglected the duo for years since.

ToeJam and his funky pal Earl were created by the programming team of Mark Voorsanger and Greg Johnson, who together developed the original in 1990. Mark's credits include Imagic's redesign of Fathom for the Colecovision/Adam, Demon Attack for the Tandy Color Computer and Night Trap.

Greg previously has worked on Starflight 1 and 2 and Caveman Ugh-lympics, all published by Electronic Arts. Currently, Greg and Mark are involved with a start-up technology company in California called Electric Planet. "They have some pretty hot new technology that is on the cutting edge of where I believe computer interaction is going," Greg says.

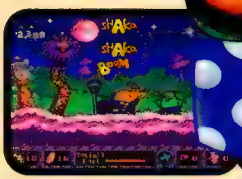
In 1995, the two teamed up again to develop Orly's Draw-A-Story, a creativity CD-ROM for kids on PC and Mac, released in early 1997. Orly drew critical acclaim from the likes of *Computer Life* and *Newsweek*, but has not been a market success. A demo of the game is available at **www.orlystory.com**.

During the years following the release of the two ToeJam & Earl games, Sega owned the rights, so releasing the game on other platforms was impossible. In 1995 the two regained the rights to ToeJam & Earl. So is a new game in the works? Mark says, "YES!"

Greg and Mark are interested in hearing from fans on what they'd like to see in a new version: what platform (PC, PlayStation, N64, etc.), and whether you liked the first or second game more. Hopefully the response will encourage them to do an updated installment and a publisher to release the game.

You can e-mail **comments@tjande.com**, or send snail mail to ToeJam & Earl Productions, 6 School St., Suite 200, Fairfax, CA 94930.
www.tjande.com

The original is considered a classic by many with its two-player cooperative play.



The second TJ&E game, Panic on Funkotron, was the last time we'd heard from them.

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International News
インターナショナル ニュース

Game Boy Lights Up
Nintendo finally adds the Game Boy's second most-wanted feature

Nintendo Co. Ltd. will launch a new Game Boy model called the Game Boy Light in April. Like the name implies, the Game Boy Light has a backlight feature for the screen so now you can play your Game Boy in poorly lit places (it's still not color though). There's a switch on the top so you can choose backlighted or regular display before and during gameplay. The Game Boy Light plays all current GB games.

A bit larger than the GB Pocket, but smaller than the original Game Boy, it weighs about 190g (with batteries).

It requires two AA batteries and lasts 12 gameplay hours with the backlight on and 20 hours without it, according to Nintendo.

In the spirit of the Game Boy Pocket series, there will be two colors available at launch, gold and silver.

Game Boy Light will be launched April 14, for 6,800 yen. Nintendo also announced that it is lowering the price of the standard Game Boy Pocket to 5,800 yen beginning Feb. 14.

At press time, Nintendo of America had not announced whether the Game Boy Light is planned for a U.S. release.

A PlayStation Monopoly
Sony comes under fire for allegedly breaking fair trade law in Japan

In January, a Japanese anti-monopoly watchdog group ordered Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. to cease price control of its retail software for the PlayStation.

Basically, the Fair Trade Commission (FTC) in Japan contends that Sony violated Japanese law by forcing retailers to sell PlayStation games at fixed prices, in an attempt to curb the used game sales. Other alleged violations include a Sony restriction forcing retailers to only sell to consumers and wholesalers to retailers. If a client violated this restriction, Sony would terminate its contract or cease shipments to that client.

The FTC has given Sony until Jan. 30 to follow through with the order. No information was given as to what the FTC would do if Sony didn't comply with the order. A Sony spokesperson said, "We are confident that our business practices did not violate anti-monopoly laws, and we do not plan to accept the FTC's order."

In early February, Enix, makers of the Dragon Quest series announced that they will add a clause in their contract with retailers barring them to buy or sell secondhand game titles. The company will switch to direct distribution of their own titles in April.

Pikachu In My Pocket
Nintendo's little yellow bundle of epileptic joy goes virtual

Nintendo Co. Ltd. is entering the market for virtual pets with their first product in the category, Pocket Pikachu. Players can feed and pamper their very own Pikachu, who incidentally is the most popular character in the Pocket Monsters line of Game Boy titles.

But don't mistake Pocket Pikachu for your standard virtual pet—this thing's high-tech. Aside from feeding and taking care of Pikachu, you can also help him grow by giving him a workout—he grows according to the distance you walk. Pocket Pikachu has a built-in pedometer, which makes little Pikachu walk on screen with his user. Pikachu also brushes his teeth in the morning and takes a bath at night.

Pocket Pickachu will be released in Japan on March 27 for 2,500 yen (about US $19). The company says it has no plans to sell the game outside of Japan.

Tidbits...

Sega Kicks Off New Year

At Sega's annual New Year's party in Japan, Sega Enterprises Chairman Isao Ookawa officially announced that Sega and Microsoft are indeed co-developing Sega's new console.

Surprising no one, Ookawa was not forthcoming about specific details, saying only that, "We have joined hands with Microsoft in the development of [our] next console system."

Bill Gates reportedly made an appearance at the party via video attesting to his company's commitment to the project.

The new console is believed to be based on Microsoft's Windows CE operating system and has a communications link feature as well.

In other Sega news, Nikkan Kougyou Shimbun says that Sega is secretly developing a portable gaming console for simultaneous release with its next system.

The portable is believed to have a data connection feature to exchange information with the new Sega console. Sega is reportedly thinking about the same kind of plan that Nintendo is using with its 64GB Pak to transfer data from portable to home games.

Saturn Gets Resident Evil 2

According to Capcom of Japan, Resident Evil 2 (called Bio Hazard 2 in Japan), is headed to the Saturn in the not-too-distant future, and will use the Saturn's 4 MB RAM cart.

Sales of the PlayStation version in the U.S. topped 380,000 during its first weekend of release, and is doing better in Japan.

In other Capcom news, the planned PlayStation release of D&D Collection has been shelved so that the company can focus on other projects within the company.

Top 10 in Japan
The 10 Best-Selling Games As of Jan. 25

1. Sentimental Grafitti (NEC Interchannel)–SS
2. Gran Turismo (Sony)–PS
3. Tomb Raider II (Victor Soft)–PS
4. Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon (Square)–PS
5. Street (Chun Soft)–SS
6. Formula 1 '97 (Sony)–PS
7. Pocket Monsters (Nintendo)–GB
8. Tales of Destiny (Namco)–PS
9. Train De GO! (Taito)–PS
10. Momotarou Dentetsu 7 (Hudson)–PS

Sushi-X Files

e-mail: shawn_smith@zd.com

Something Special For Loyal Subscribers Only!

DECAPITATO

EGM

(dē • cap • it • ā • tō)

RINGS OF DEATH

So you want a Decapitato? There are three ways you can land yourself one. You can simply go to a store and search for it, you can guess how many April Fools' gags are in this issue of *EGM* (not including anything in the Sushi-X Files by the way) and possibly win one, or you can use this handy pattern below and make your own. You'll need a piece of heavy-duty, rubberized plastic for the job.*

START CUTTING HERE

TOP-SECRET RULES OF PLAY:

True, Decapitato has long been shrouded in mystery. The Ancient Aztecs played Decapitato to see which tribe's chief was strongest. Instead of flexible (but deadly) plastic, they used giant stone discs. While the French Revolution was winding down, a steel version of Decapitato replaced the guillotine for public executions. During the first World War, the allied forces used Decapitato to take down snipers from afar. Consequently, those same troops used Decapitato as a form of entertainment when the War ended—many a great soldier was lost due to the unforgiving edge of Decapitato. Then Decapitato came to the States and remained an underground sport for some time...that is, UNTIL NOW! Yes, the editors of *EGM* have long played the game that is as deadly as it is fun, but few knew what it was or how to play it. Well, with a little legal work and a lot of luck, we're finally able to disclose the rules of this award-winning game! Here's how it breaks down...first you need a flying stunt disc of some kind (perhaps one that's shaped like a ring). Next, you need to find a long, narrow and dimly lit hallway (preferably where there's low traffic—or high if you're feeling especially dangerous). Of course, no game of Decapitato would be complete without a group of close friends and enemies gathered at each end of the hallway. Now, one side has the Decapitato and throws it toward the other team. Since it's dark, they can't see what's about to hopefully hit them. If someone gets hurt (or hit), your team gets one (1) point. Now it's the opposite team's turn. The first team to reach ten (10) kills...er, points, wins Two Decapitatos are optional and greatly increase the odds of a decapitation*. Good luck, and as Decapitato professionals say, "heads off to you, chum." Send your stories of Decapitato action to:

Sushi-X Files
1920 Highland Ave. Ste. 222
Lombard, IL 60148.

*EGM cannot and will not be responsible for any injury or injuries sustained from playing the aforementioned Decapitato. Remember that this is a game played by highly trained professionals. If you do play it though, do so in good fun without evil intentions. It's kind of a joke, so be careful for crying out loud.

EGM LOWLIGHTS

Now here's something you don't see everyday. The inner workings of the *EGM* office have gone a little haywire. It's your job to find what in the heck is wrong with this picture so we can take care of the problem* Remember: Things that may seem weird can very well be normal in the world of *EGM*...

* there are over 20 things wrong with this picture. Find 'em and you're GOOD

SEGA
www.sega.com
and stuff
SHINING FORCE III
THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD
PANZER DRAGOON SAGA
Day 42. The standoff continues. Suspect presumed paranoid. Has been known to roam dungeons and consort with bandits and sprites in Shining Force III. Believed to be mutilating and blowing heads off zombies in House of the Dead. Purported member of Panzer Dragoon Saga cult, which claims that ancient, morphing "dragon friend" holds the key to salvation from evil. Approach with extreme caution: suspect known to use thumbs when threatened.
For more info or to order call 1-800-SEGA-SALES or visit www.sega.com

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WW3

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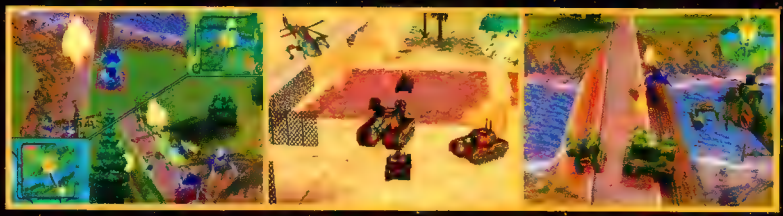
The horror of global combat is coming to your living room. Twenty years ago, the WOPR, the deadly military supercomputer, nearly ignited the Cold War. Now the WOPR is back with a new mission: Exterminate humanity. You command NORAD's forces on land, at sea, and in the air as you plunge into battle against the WOPR's mechanical legions. The world's future hangs in the balance. It's not a game anymore.



- Launch strategic attacks with over 32 different assault units.
- Command up to 8 killing machines at once and blow the WOPR's drones into silicon dust.
- Turn friends into enemies in the PlayStation™ game console's first split-screen two-player combat game.
- Feel the terror of combat as detailed graphics and a true 3-D environment bring battles to life.

INTERACTIVE STUDIOS

WARGAMES™ DEFCON 1

MGM INTERACTIVE

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- Q-Mann's life in jeopardy?
- 64-Bit Sega: Call it a comeback
- Star gazing with LiDo 239
- Bill gets the Gates treatment
- 64DD: lots of power, no games
- MD game system from Sony?

Quartermann

Hello Quarterfans, welcome to another dramatic installment of Quartermann, the meanest, most risk-takin', death-defyin' scaffolding-swingin' bullet-avoidin' gaming spy in all the land. Now although the Q has put his life on the line several times in the past (all in the name of gaming), never before has the fear of the almighty shivered through my nervous system as it has since the Q-crew broke the story on the 64DD last month. Now we all sleep at night with bullet-proof vests affixed to our paranoid, quivering bodies, only to wake up in a pool of cold sweat....I guess it's better than a pool of something else....

QUARTERMANN ON THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST?

(Redmond, Wa) It seems that certain powers that be at Nintendo of America flipped their collective lids when they caught wind of the Q's report that the 64DD might not (I repeat, might not) make it to the U.S. in 1998. To hear them describe it, the mere thought of the 64DD not making its 1998 U.S. launch is totally preposterous...how dare I report such absurd rumors....OK, fine, but that still doesn't explain why mysterious little red laser sights have been pointed toward my skull recently. So what do I do? I march straight into Terry Aki's office and ask him again, "Are you sure the 64DD won't come out this year in the U.S.?" And again, he said that at least in Japan, the soonest we would see a U.S.-friendly killer-app game for the 64DD is mid-1999, and by then it may be too late. So unless someone other than NCL (say, Rare for example) can produce a 64DD game with enough universal appeal to sell the upgrade in mass quantities, the unit is still on life-support no matter what NoA says. Now if DKC64 makes an appearance on the 64DD at this year's E³...well, that changes everything....

LiDo 239 UNVEILED AT LAST

(Kyoto, Japan) As you may or may not already know, the Q was first to report on LiDo 239 (Nintendo's top-secret hardware project) back in issue 100. Terry Aki (*EGM*'s Japanese spy stud) put his life on the line to give you, our loyal readers, the latest gaming gossip out of Japan. As it turned out, LiDo 239 is a satellite hardware joint-venture between Nintendo of Japan (NCL) and Kyocera Corp. For those of you who don't know, Kyocera is a "global producer of high-technology solutions in such fields as metal processing, automotive components, communications, optics, medicine, energy and semiconductors" And with 29,000+ employees in more than 20 countries, Kyocera is one of Japan's biggest electronic manufacturers. So what does this have to do with Nintendo and project LiDo 239? Lots. As NCL looks to strengthen their position as much as they can toward the new millennium, they know better than anybody else the future of gaming ain't in cartridges. The only problem is that Nintendo has limited experience in optical software formats (CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, etc.). However, one thing Nintendo does know better than Sega, Sony or anyone else is digital satellite gaming technology (in Japan, Nintendo introduced a successful satellite gaming service for the 16-Bit Super Famicom). Digital satellite gaming has the potential to supersede the capacity of a cart, CD, DVD or anything else on the foreseeable horizon. Nintendo and Kyocera will each invest a cool 6 billion yen into St. Giga, which is Japan's premiere satellite music provider. Due in Japan around the year 2000, the LiDo 239 upgrade will "attach to a Nintendo console" (whether or not that "Nintendo console" refers to the N64 or its successor remains to be seen). Players will then be able to access not only the latest Nintendo games but music programs, gaming tips and much, much more...for a nom nal fee...of course. I smelled a rat, so I dug deeper...Check this out...the reason LiDo 239 was shrouded in so much infra red-detectin', hidden camera-watchin', Doberman-ridden security is because Nintendo announced a similar satellite "joint venture" with Microsoft earlier this year. Gates and Co. were apparently unaware that NCL and Kyocera were having an affair behind Microsoft's back. I suppose NCL didn't want Bill to know the bridge underneath him was being burned....

HYBRID HARDWARE HEAVEN FROM...SEGA?

(Tokyo, Japan) The latest buzz around the development community involves the recent sightings of near-final Sega Dural (also know as Katana) development systems. Q-spies indicate that not only are the Katana specs pretty much now set in stone, but that Sega has been quietly shipping beta dev kits to select developers. From what we hear, certain Japanese third-party companies have secured licensing rights to develop Katana software. They include: Hudson, T&E Soft, ASCII, Capcom, Konami, Artdink, MCS Masaya, JVC/Victor, Warp, Microcabin, Climax, Compile, Enix, Human, Genki, Atlus, Treasure, Taito, Acclaim Japan, NEC and...believe it or not...Namco. Now, although this list doesn't represent all the Japanese third-party developers that have obtained licenses to make Katana games (Sega has racked up more than 40 Japanese licensees so far, with more on the way), the important thing to consider is that just because a developer has the license, it doesn't mean they have to make games right away. In fact, some of the licensees previously mentioned have not begun developing software yet and have taken a "wait and see" attitude with Katana. The good news is that the licensees who have begun Katana development are Capcom, Konami and Namco. In fact, Terry reports that the "Big Three" third-party licensees are looking to utilize coin-op versions of the Katana as well. Could this mean SF Alpha 4 and Tekken 4 would appear exclusively on Sega's new baby? Well, let's just say, truth is stranger than fiction and leave it at that....Back home in Indiana, our spies inform us that the first major U.S. developer to receive the Katana Beta development systems is Electronic Arts. Although other big U.S. third parties are ready to begin development, EA is the only one confirmed to be working on games at the moment (in fact, EA will be supporting the Katana in a big way with several sports titles due at launch or soon thereafter). Other details have emerged from within the development community. From what we understand, the Katana will feature 2 Megs of sound RAM, 8 Megs of video/texture RAM and a full 16 Megabytes of main system RAM for an unprecedented (for a console machine) 26 Megabytes of RAM (although that amount could change). Although the Katana is also designed to be used with a modem, Sega may choose to offer the device as an add-on (one positive byproduct of this is that consumers could use any modem they wish with the Katana). Sources close to the project reveal that the Katana was designed from the ground floor to be a developer-friendly, killer console for gamers. That mindset may explain why NEC/Sega's designers opted for as much RAM as possible rather than a standard modem with less RAM. The Katana's coming-out party will take place at the Tokyo Game Show this spring. Look for the U.S. rollout of Sega's new 64-Bit baby sometime in early 1999 with a Japanese launch later this year.

MORE PS64 DETAILS

(Foster City, Ca) According to our sources, Sony is seriously considering using the high-density version of their Mini-Disc format for the next PlayStation. When the Q first broke the news, the format was thought to be in the running with a rewritable version of DVD, but it now seems that the Mini-Disc HD drive is not as cost-prohibitive as a rewritable DVD drive. Both Sharp and Sony will launch an audio-only version of the Mini-Disc HD later this year in Japan, with a U.S. rollout later this fall. The format, (which, by the way, is incompatible with the original Mini-Disc) which Sony calls the "Quadruple Density MD," is very important to Sony. Not only does the QD-MD feature 650 Megabytes of infinitely rewritable storage, Sony foresees this format replacing Floppy and Zip drives while costing less than a Jaz drive. How does the PlayStation successor fit into this Mini-Disc picture? Well, Sony regards the PlayStation (and its successor) as just one cog in their global corporate machine, albeit a vital one. The next PS will physically link several technologies Sony is actively involved with (Mini-Disc, video games, online gaming) into one neat, consumer-friendly box you can buy at your local Toys 'R' Us. So what (other than play video games) does Sony want us to do on their next super console? For that answer, you'll have wait for an upcoming episode of Quartermann.

The "Q"

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HOW IT WORKS

Use weapons or oncoming traffic to slow fellow racers And fill our awaiting tanks

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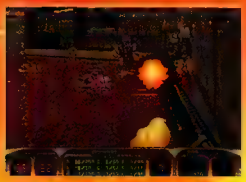
Bag some aliens with over a dozen hi-tech weapons!



An all-out overload of non-stop carnage.

DUKE NUKEM: TOTAL MELTDOWN

Duke's in town. And there's nothing he hates more than an army of alien punks crowding his space. 34 levels of freak-smashing 3D mayhem should see to it. Gigantic guns! Gruesome enemies! Total interaction! And all-out devastation! Don't mess with The Man!

PlayStation

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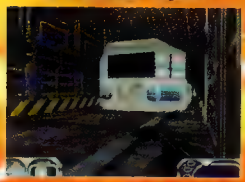
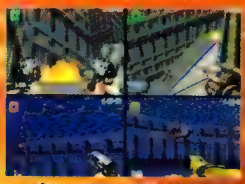
See participating retailers below. Offer good while supplies last.

Big weapons and bigger bosses in a run-filled mayhem!



Earthquakes, exploding buildings and working subways!



Four-player, split-screen Deathmatch action.

DUKE NUKEM 64

From L.A. to the moon – 32 towering levels of 100% interactive carnage! On film sets, in bars, on moving subways...no butt-ugly alien is safe from the wrath of Duke! Grenade Launchers. Shrink Rays. Hardcore 3D action. And graphics to kill for! Duke's coming to take out the garbage!

OMING SOME!

NINTENDO 64

Fred Meyer | FuncoLand Bring Home The Fun | Babbage's | software etc | Electronics Boutique | Toys "R" Us | GT Interactive Software www.gtinteractive.com

Game Directory

- Major League Baseball Featuring Ken Griffey Jr.
- Banjo-Kazooie
- Cruis'n World
- Rampage: World Tour
- All-Star Baseball '99
- Reckin' Balls
- Bio F.R.E.A.K.S.
- Mike Piazza's Strike Zone
- Turok 2
- Bomberman Hero

In Nintendo News...

There's a lot of stuff going on in the world of Nintendo. In January, Nintendo held their second Gamer's Summit at Nintendo HQ in Washington, where *EGM* got a chance to test out all of NoA's first-half releases. After a lackluster fourth quarter '97 with only three major releases, two of which were licensed from third parties, Nintendo is back in business and ready to roll in '98. Banjo-Kazooie has improved considerably since E³, while Griffey, NBA Courtside and 1080 Degree Snowboarding (which Ricciardi won't shut up about, so it must be pretty darn good) are going to boost the N64's sports presence considerably.

Later in the year we'll witness the huge marketing push behind "Pokemon" (the official U.S. title for Pocket Monsters), with a daily cartoon show, loads of toys and other goodies, and buku bucks being spent on advertising. And then of course there's the big one—Zelda 64, which is now confirmed for a fall U.S. release (and rumored to be on a gold cartridge as well—a majorly cool little "extra" for long-time fans of the series).

Throw in Conker's Quest, two unannounced Rare games that'll be shown at E³ (Donkey Kong 64, anyone?) and whatever else NoA pulls out of their hat, and we're talking about a huge year. Now if only they'd get us Metroid 64. Hmm...

Finally, Baseball On The N64!

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo of America Angel Studios/Nintendo	1-4 Sports	85	May 1998

Web Address: www.nintendo.com

Major League Baseball
Featuring Ken Griffey Jr.

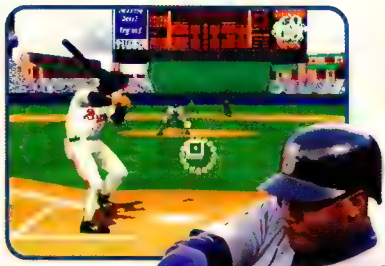
In development now for well over a year, Angel Studios' Major League Baseball Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. is looking better than ever. Recently shown at Nintendo's Gamer's Summit in Seattle, Griffey was (according to Nintendo) only about 40-45 percent complete. Still, it played like a nearly finished game, and it looked like one too. The game provides an arcade-style (read: fun) experience without sacrificing any of the things serious baseball fans want: full stat tracking, official player and team licenses, all 30 stadiums and most important—realistic, smooth play.

Griffey features four different main modes of play: Exhibition, Season, World Series and Home Run Derby. In addition, there are three different skill levels to choose from, as well as multiplayer capabilities for up to four players. Of course, the game supports the Rumble Pak too.

The first thing we noticed when playing Griffey was the extremely polished batter/pitcher interface. The pitcher selects a target in or around the batter's strike zone and then chooses a pitch and unleashes. Sounds standard, right? The innovation lies in the target cursor, which slowly fades in and out of the screen—in sync with your pitcher's heartbeat. As your pitcher gets tired, his heartbeat will increase, and the accuracy of the pitch will decrease. It's a unique feature that works quite well. As for batting, you have complete control over your swing—the analog control stick provides for extremely fluid movement, allowing you to swing in just about any direction you'd like. Fielding is simple too. The four C buttons correspond to the four bases, making it almost impossible to throw to the wrong base by "accident."

Obviously Griffey's got great graphics. But what you don't see here is the amazing animation, the lifelike crowds and stadiums and the realistic sounds. Some of the camera angles (particularly fielding ones) are just sweet, too. You've definitely gotta see this one in motion.

MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. is due out on May 25, and right now it's at the forefront of the N64 baseball games headed our way (development-wise, anyway). Hopefully there won't be any more big delays, as this is one game sports fans aren't going to want to miss.



The batting interface isn't entirely new, but it works extremely well.

As you can see, the game has come a long way since the version Nintendo showed at last year's E³.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo of America Rare	1 Action	80	July 1998

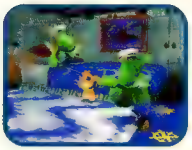
Web Address: www.nintendo.com

Banjo-Kazooie

Strange Name, Great Game

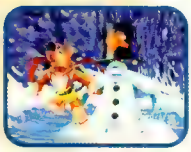
Originally planned to be Nintendo's big holiday title last year for the N64, Banjo-Kazooie ended up going through two huge delays, pushing the game's release back from last November to this coming July. Fortunately the extra time that Rare's had to work on the game is obviously paying off—what we played recently at Nintendo was majorly improved over last June's already impressive version that was shown at E³.

Banjo and Kazooie will meet many oddball characters on their journey, like Bottles, a "well-informed" mole.



Banjo-Kazooie could be simply defined as a Mario 64 clone and left at that, but it's just no longer true. There's so much depth to the game, so much variety and technique—and such amazing graphics (yes, Rare's topped themselves yet again), that BK is sure to keep gamers glued to their sets for far longer than Mario 64 ever did. In fact, the depth of gameplay is what really makes BK shine. For one, you've got two main characters (Banjo and Kazooie) who each have unique abilities and must help each other out throughout the game (combined, they have over 20 different moves and techniques at their disposal). That alone adds much to the game. But then there are the multiple objectives on each of the game's nine worlds. Not only must the pair search out and find special Puzzle Pieces that are hidden throughout (similar to the Stars in Mario 64, if you will), but they must also collect special Musical Notes, Mumbo Tokens, Jinjo Birds and more. To get past certain obstacles they'll have to rely on the help of a shaman named Mumbo who can transform them into different creatures that each have their own special abilities.

Red feathers allow Kazooie (and Banjo) to fly for a limited amount of time. Each "flap" costs a feather.



BK is looking incredibly promising right now, and with Rare's proven track record, we're confident that the game will be everything we've expected and more when it's released this July. We'll be back with more on this one soon.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release*
[illegible]	[illegible]	90	[illegible]

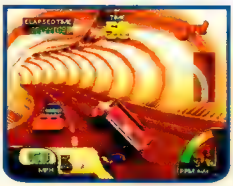
Web Address: [illegible]

Cruis'n World

As one of the early N64 titles released, Cruis'n USA sold phenomenally well—over a million copies, in fact—despite complaints from gamers (and press) that the game was censored a bit from the arcade version. Now, the sequel is well into development (it's being handled by Eurocom, the folks behind Duke Nukem 64), and it's on schedule for a June release (and uncensored, too!).

The biggest improvement Cruis'n World offers over the first game is the ability to travel through different parts of the world. But even more unique to the N64 version (as opposed to the arcade version) is the inclusion of the new Championship Mode, which features all-new tracks that weren't in the arcade game. Other improvements over the original include tighter control, smoother animation, the ability to drift (which adds a ton to the gameplay) and Rumble Pak capability. In addition, up to four players can race at once on a split-screen.

Fans of the original will surely want to check out Cruis'n World. Our only complaint is that there's still a TON of pop-up on the tracks, but again, this was still an early version of the game. Hopefully Eurocom will be able to clean things up a bit before the final release, because Cruis'n World looks like it could be a nice improvement over Cruis'n USA.



Cruis'n World features all of the arcade tracks, as well as a large assortment of N64-exclusive ones.

This time, the races span the entire globe, to far-off exotic places, like this uhh...desert place. Umm, yeah. That's it.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Midway Sapphire	1-3 Action	95	March 1998

Web Address: www.midway.com

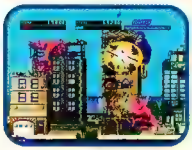
Rampage: World Tour

Big Ol' Monsters on the N64

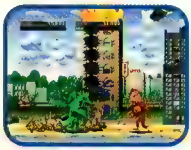
Most gamers can remember back to the days of the original NES when Rampage first came out for that system. After slaving away at all 50 states, all you got was a "Congratulations." The game may have been fun, but it left you feeling kind of empty inside. Thankfully, Rampage has come a long way since then, and the Nintendo 64 version from Midway proves this.

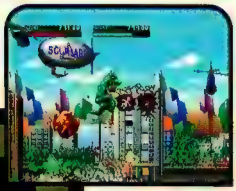
Even though this version of Rampage: World Tour resembles its arcade father and PlayStation cousin, it has plenty of features that set it apart from both of them. The added Three-player Mode is arguably the best feature of the cart, and the selectable palettes for each character and other N64-style graphic effects certainly don't hurt it either. What's more is that the game supports the Rumble Pak. Now when you knock over buildings and swat down attack choppers, you can feel it in the palm of your monster hand.

The three main beastly stars of the game (Lizzy, Ralph and George) are back to demolish as much as they can in 131 cities. Since you're going on a "World Tour," you'll find your monsters taking trips to exotic places in Europe and Asia, among others. Wherever you may go though, what remains at this game's core is that it's a fun smash-'em-up that should give gamers many hours of play.



The objective here is simple enough: Destroy everything.





Even big, annoyed monsters know how to have a good time.

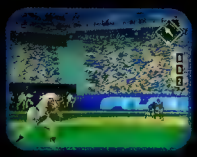
On your way around the world, you'll even take out capitol buildings.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Acclaim Acclaim Studios	1-4 Sports	60	May 1998

Web Address: www.acclaimnation.com

All-Star Baseball '99

Player performance facts and 100 other individual stats are tracked per game.



All MLB and MLBPA licenses and all 30 stadiums are included.

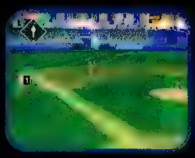
Right off the bat (pardon the pun) the animation and high-res graphics in All-Star Baseball '99 are quite impressive to see. And, while it may seem like this game is an extract of the QB Club formula, it's actually driven by Acclaim Studios' new "Quagmire" engine–an improved (so they say) real-time polygonal 3-D motor.

Exhibition, Playoffs and Home Run Derby Modes give you the simple quick play option while Season Mode offers many more variations to select from. In Season Mode, you may trade players and sign free agents as well as tap the farm system up to 15 times a season. Use create-a-player to build the perfect individual player by choosing size, weight, height, facial hair and a few other unique attributes.

To break things up, All-Star '99 has a mid-season Home Run Derby as well as an All-Star Game. End your run with MVP Cy Young and Rolaids Relief Pitcher awards.

Finally, several weather effects including wind, clouds, rain, heavy rain and even snow are selectable. Night and day games are an option as well.

It's obvious All-Star Baseball '99 has the looks and option power to rival any baseball game on the market. The big question now is "how does it play?" Look to the Review Crew to answer that question and more in the coming months.



A floating camera will let you view from anywhere on the field.

Each batter has his own "sweet spot" within the hitting square.

Ninja School Class of '98
Drama Club
Crossing Guard
Math Club
Glee Club
Marching Band
Debate Team
Wood Shop
Voted most likely to star in his own video game
French Club
Book Club
AV Squad
Yearbook Staff
Explore a seemingly limitless 3-D world of bewildering labyrinths, monstrous caves, underwater caverns and even Mt. Fuji and a coffee shop or two.
Even the hugest, meanest, ugliest, most dreadful mechanical boss is destined for the scrap heap once Goemon jumps into his supercharged mech.
As any one of our four characters, you've got people to meet and places to go to find the clues that'll help you acquire the special powers and keys you need to complete your quest.
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MYSTICAL NINJA STARRING GOEMON

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Acclaim Acclaim Studios	1-4 Racing	70	May 1998

Web Address: www.acclaimnation.com

Reckin' Balls

Not As Destructive As The Name Implies

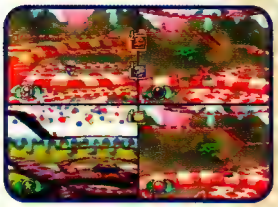
A surprise game announcement from developer Acclaim Studios, Reckin' Balls is a quirky Nintendo 64 title that combines racing and platform elements, then wraps them into a cuddly package.

Designed with simplicity in mind, up to four players can choose between eight different balls that include a Jack-O-Lantern, an Iguana, a Space Alien and a Ninja (there are also an additional eight secret ones) to race on over 100 tracks in 10 differently themed environments. The 3-D raceways are complex, but simple to navigate—as long as you avoid the obstacles along the way. The goal of the game is to reach the top of each track by picking up useful weapons, and speedily using a grappling hook to pull yourself up to the next level of the track. This hook can also be used to grab and slow down your opponents.

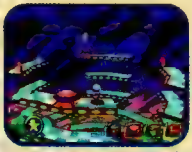
Acclaim Studios intends to make Reckin' Balls a strong multiplayer title, and thus, plenty of options are available. There is a competitive Battle Mode with separate Battle Arenas, in addition to a Team Combo Mode and a Time Trial. There are also a few fancy bonus levels that can be opened up by accomplishing in-game feats.

While Reckin' Balls seems to be designed with a younger audience in mind, fun gameplay could certainly widen its appeal to everyone—and isn't that really the true test of a good game?

One look at this screen shot, and you can tell that this is probably one of the most harmless racing games ever.



Reckin' Balls puts a strong emphasis on good multiplayer gameplay.



The goal of the game is to jump onto each successively higher ledge to get to the end of the race.

Bio F.R.E.A.K.S

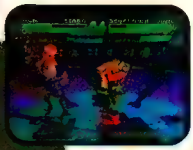
Bio F.R.E.A.K.S. is yet another interesting twist on the somewhat tired fighting genre. The game makes its mark with originality and shock appeal. And yes—this one just may shock you a little.

Eleven 3-D, in-the-round arenas featuring flashing lights, dangerous traps and multiple platforms serve as the battleground for you and 10 other mutant fighters. Characters have a wide variety of weapons including: projectiles, guns, standard punches and kicks and the ability to mutilate. Take off an opponent's arm or leg and watch the blood pump out of the fresh wound...now that's entertainment. You may also use preset combos as well as double combos to inflict major damage. Heat-seeking missiles, grenades and even giant shredders figure into the mix as well.

We'll bring you more on this interesting title as it becomes available.

This first-person perspective is an interesting, if not quirky option.

You'll notice this fighter has just lost her left arm, yet still continues to fight. What passion!



One of the more interesting characters, the "Psyclown," adds a bizarre flavor to the game.

ACTIVISION

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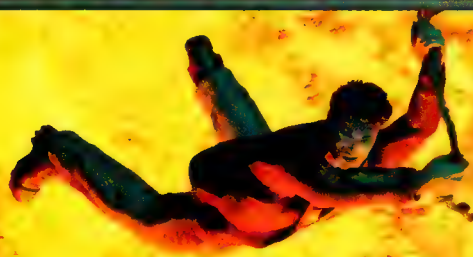

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
GT Interactive Devil's Thumb Ent.	1-2 Sports	65	2nd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.gtgames.com

Mike Piazza's StrikeZone

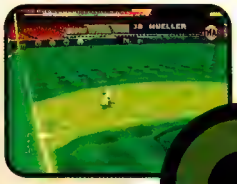
Can Piazza Match Up Well Against Griffey?

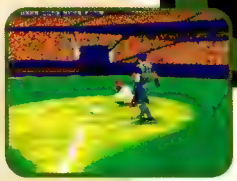
Inevitably, one of the toughest baseball diamond match-ups of the year will not be fought in a stadium, but rather in stores between Mike Piazza and Ken Griffey Jr. on the Nintendo 64. Adding irony to the contest is that some of the people that created the excellent 16-Bit SNES version of Griffey years ago are now at GT Interactive making StrikeZone. Funny how the game industry works.

With plenty of serious baseball simulations on the way, the makers of StrikeZone have opted to create a realistic baseball game with an arcade flavor. There are plenty of exaggerated elements (super-fast pitches, exaggerated plays, and incredible light-trailed hits and home runs) that the developers hope will give this 3-D baseball game a unique swagger.

Eccentricities aside, StrikeZone will be packed with options to keep baseball purists happy. A Simulation Mode will be included in the game, in addition to full team drafts and management (create, trade, sign players). Wanna-be general managers and number freaks should have plenty of fun sifting through the 50 categories of "by-the-book" player statistics.

Certainly, by adding arcade elements to a baseball simulation, StrikeZone is attempting to cater to a wide variety of baseball tastes. Hopefully, when it's finished, it will play well from both sides of the fence.





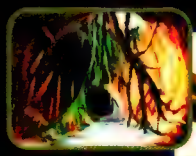
A simple pitching/batting interface makes Strike Zone easy to jump into.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Acclaim Acclaim Studios	1 First-Person Shooter	N/A	August 1998

Web Address: www.acclaimnation.com

Turok 2

For you Turok fans out there, get ready for the sequel due out sometime in August. Visually, we have nothing to work off of except a good number of conceptual sketches, renders and level designs. Expect a whole new cast of bad muthas to shoot holes through (we've seen no dinos so far), and plenty of interesting environments to explore. We'll keep you up to speed as we get more info on Turok 2.



The conceptual stuff from Turok 2 looks awesome...now let's see some gameplay!

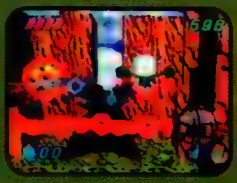
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release*
Hudson Soft Hudson Soft	1-4 Action	N/A	March 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.hudson.co.jp

Bomberman Hero

インターナショナル プリビュース

For those of you who have yet to check out Bomberman 64, you'd better hurry up and get playing—the sequel is already on the way! (Well, in Japan, anyway.) Hudson Soft did however tell us that a U.S. release is planned—they just didn't reveal the publisher. Anyway, we don't have too much info on this new sequel, but



Apparently our explosive hero can now take to the air (or the sea) with some special items.

we do know that the B-man will now be collecting special parts that can be used to transform him into different forms (that can fly, swim, etc.). Of course, the Battle Mode will be back as well. We'll have more info on this one as it comes to us.

Warning. This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

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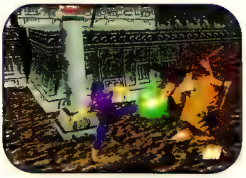
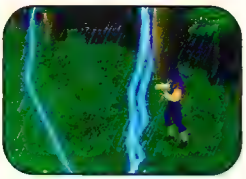
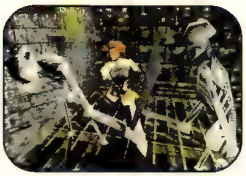
Light Burn, most commonly brought on by prolonged exposure to arc welding, bright snow, tanning lamps and intense 3-D game graphics.

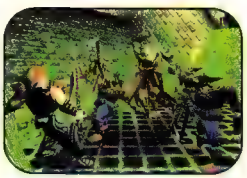
To receive playing tips and reduce your chances of light burn, call the ***Eidos Hint Line (900) 773 - 4367.***

Cost of call: $0.95/minute. Must be 18 years or have parent's permission. Touch tone phone required.









Light burn. It's the silent injury. Severe pain may not occur until up to six hours after initial exposure to Eidos games like Deathtrap Dungeon and Ninja. At which point, despite all protests, the player must stop playing and be put to rest in a darkened room. Because it's all fun and gameplay until someone loses an eye.

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You've been warned.

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PlayStation

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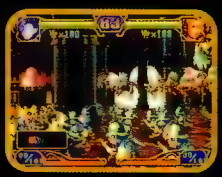
Game Directory
- House of the Dead
- Panzer Dragoon Saga
- Phantasy Star Collection

In Sega News...

It's all beginning to wind down in Saturn land, with only a trickle of new releases scheduled for the remainder of '98, and literally zero third-party support outside of Working Designs with their April release of Magic Knight Rayearth. It's too bad things worked out the way they did for Sega, because there are some truly great games on the Saturn, and with the proper marketing, it



It's time to reward Saturn fans for sticking with Sega all the way. How about a translated Dragon Force II for the American audience?

could've done so much better here in the U.S. With all eyes on their upcoming "super system" that's in the works (which may be unveiled in March at the Tokyo Game Show, or at the latest E³ in May), Sega needs to do the best they can to keep whatever Saturn owners are left happy. If that means porting over games like Phantasy Star Collection, Shining Force III parts 2 and 3, Dragon Force II and more, then so be it. It's no secret that Sega has upset quite a few fans in recent years, so at the very least keeping their remaining supporters satisfied until the new machine arrives is an absolute must.

The Zombie Smash Comes Home

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega of America Sega Enterprises, Ltd.	1-2 Light Gun	N/A	April 1998

Web Address: www.sega.com

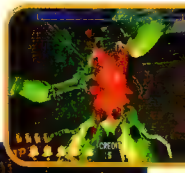
House of the Dead

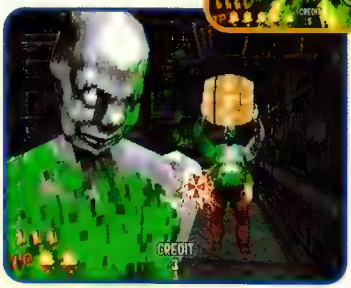
Games with horror themes have always been popular. Why, look at the success games like Resident Evil (and its sequel), Splatterhouse and Castlevania all share. Since this is the case, it's no surprise that the horrific arcade gun-game, House of the Dead, is making its way home to the Saturn.

For those of you not familiar with the arcade version, HotD allows you to control one of two special agents as they search for a colleague in a very bizarre mansion that doubles as a laboratory. While you make your way through the joint, guns a-blazin', you're attacked by an array of different monsters ranging from flesh-eating zombies to insane monkeys and every creature in between.

With all of these beasts running about, it's smart to keep lots of ammo in your chamber and a keen sense of aim. In fact, well-placed shots can send undead limbs a-flyin' and leave holes the size of grapefruits where zombie brains used to be.

With all of the shooting that will undoubtedly be going on, be mindful of innocent scientists who may be running around, hiding from zombies. In some cases, instead of a giant slug coming around a corner, it'll be a harmless scientist who just stopped by the lab to pick up his/her check. If you shoot them, you lose a point.





Isn't this always the way? You're just minding your own business and some zombie thugs start throwing barrels at you. Boy, oh boy...stupid zombies.

Since this version of HotD is on the Saturn, you can adjust the game's parameters, including how many lives you get, crosshair style and number of continues. On top of these options, this HotD has a couple exclusive modes of play.

In the Saturn Mode, you can go through the game in a whole different way from the arcade, and have one of six characters to do it with. These characters feature unique attributes like health, chamber storage, aiming ability and reload time. For example, a character who has five health points and a powerful gun may only be able to hold two bullets in the clip at a time. In addition, there's a Boss Mode where you can take a crack at the game's Bosses to better find their weak points.

We should have more info when we get an American beta in that's more complete.

Now kill the zombies to get back at them for that barrel thing.

Blowing away the undead hasn't been this much fun since RE.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega of America Sega Enterprises, Ltd.	1 RPG	85	March 1998

Web Address: www.sega.com

Panzer Dragoon Saga

Sega's Answer To Final Fantasy VII

We promised you an update on this hot new RPG, and here it is. As we've said before, Panzer Saga is a role-playing game that takes place in the mystical Panzer universe (a sort of Mad Maxish futuristic world where wars are fought with ancient biological weapons). A long and well-rendered intro will immediately immerse players in this world.

When the game starts, you'll find yourself walking around in a 3-D world. To perform actions, you must pull up a targeting sight. You can move this sight over objects to check them out (a twist on the old cursor-over-the-hot-spot gameplay of graphical adventures like Discworld).

Parts of the game play on foot, sans dragon, in a third-person perspective.

After a while, you'll encounter your mount: a friendly dragon who saves you from certain death. From this point on, you can fly around anywhere you want (but you still use the targeting sight to look for items or activate switches and such).

The early levels are pretty straightforward. This means the game follows a linear plot line (yes, you have complete freedom of movement, but the game guides you along where the programmers intend you to go). Throughout your travels, in-game cinemas and full-motion video will weave the story together, like in Sony's Final Fantasy VII.

Also, as in most RPGs, fights will interrupt your adventure. Panzer Saga's battle engine combines elements from the previous Panzer games with a unique half turn-based, half real-time system. Once an encounter starts, a three-step time meter will begin to charge up. When the first level is full, you can perform a simple action (like shoot your carried weapon). You can wait longer, however, for the second or third step. This will give you access to the more powerful attacks, like the dragon's berserk powers (which cost magic points and is earned through level raises). The downside? While you're waiting for the time meter to fill all the way up, you're susceptible to enemy attacks, which won't wait for you.

This is no ordinary crossover of genres. Panzer Dragoon Saga is a unique RPG with never-before-seen gameplay ideas. Fans of the two shooter/action games in the series should feel right at home with this spin-off. It has the same high-quality music, graphics and ambience Panzer I and II have. If you're looking for something different and epic, keep an eye out for this one.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega Enterprises, Ltd. Sega Enterprises, Ltd.	1 RPG	90	April 1998

Web Address: www.sega.co.jp

Phantasy Star Collection

All four Phantasy Star games—from the Master System original to its three 16-Bit sequels—are being rereleased on the Saturn, with some nifty extras and enhancements.

Some text improvements will only benefit Japanese players, but the new ability to walk at twice the normal speed (it's an option) is very cool for any fan of the games. There are some other minor improvements too, like the ability to save to four different slots in PS3 (so you can work toward each of the four endings separately), but overall these games are more or less the same as they were when you first played them many years ago.

In addition to the games, PSC will feature a Gallery Mode which has several pieces of artwork from the games, as well as some arranged music, commercial clips and more.

Is it too late for PS Collection in the U.S.? Unfortunately it seems that way, but we can always hope. After all, what better way could Sega treat their fans who stuck with the Saturn to the very end? Look for it in Japan in April.

Ahh, Phantasy Star. The classic series returns for one more go-round on the Saturn. Could PSV be on the way?

ナル プリビューズ

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.

IT'S NOT A MASK...
IT'S A MUZZLE.
MIKE PIAZZA
CATCHER, LA DODGERS

YOU TAKE. YOU STEAL.

YOU SLUG. YOU CRUSH.

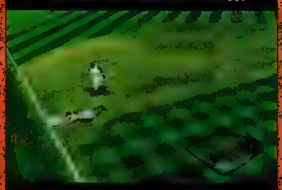
YOU HIT AND RUN.

YOU TRY TO BEAT THE HEAT.

AND AT THE END OF IT ALL
SOME GUY IN A MASK
TRIES TO TAKE YOU DOWN
TO PROTECT HIS HOME.

WELCOME TO
AMERICA'S PASTIME.

ALL THE STADIUMS! ALL THE TEAMS INCLUDING 2 NEW EXPANSION TEAMS! ALL IN 3D!



FAST-PACED ACTION: SWITCH FROM TRUE SIMULATION TO ARCADE GAME PLAY WITH TONS OF HIDDEN SECRETS!

EXHIBITION, FULL-SEASON, ALL-STAR, WORLD SERIES AND HOME RUN DERBY PLAY MODES.

ULTRA-REALISTIC CONDITIONS AND PERFORMANCE. GRASS AND TURF. DAY AND NIGHT GAMES. RAIN OR SHINE. REAL FAN INTERACTION.

MIKE PIAZZA'S STRIKE ZONE

DIG IN.

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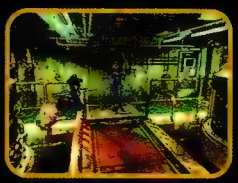
In Sony News...

The PlayStation is off to a rocket start in '98, with quite a few big games already available or coming very soon (we've had more "8" and "9" ratings for PS games in the first four months of '98 than we had nearly all last year!). RE2 has broken nearly every early sales record imaginable (380,000 copies in one weekend is no small task!), while games like Alundra and Final Fantasy Tactics have been enjoying brisk sales as well.



With numbers like these, don't expect to see any new Sony hardware for quite some time. The PS hasn't even peaked yet, and the best years are still to come. Instead, look forward to an alarming amount of great games in the next year or two, not unlike '93 and '94 (the glory days of the SNES and Genesis). Isn't it exciting?!

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
SCEA SCEI/Polys Ent.	1-2 Racing	70	May 1998

Web Address: www.playstation.com

Gran Turismo

First previewed back in *EGM* #102, Sony's Gran Turismo (the "Real Driving Simulator"), has finally been released in Japan. In its first month of availability, the game sold over 1 million copies, making it the hottest-selling game of the holiday season in Japan. Much to our surprise, we've already received an early U.S. version of GT, complete with some minor "improvements," and needless to say—we're impressed.

Gran Turismo was developed by Polys Entertainment, the same folks who brought us the Motor Toon Grand Prix games. But while the Motor Toon games provided more of a cartoony, arcade-style racing experience, Gran Turismo is all about realism. So much so, in fact, that the Japanese version of the game features over 145 real cars (no, that's not a typo) from such major names as Honda, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Aston Martin, Chevrolet and more. The U.S. version is likely to have less cars, due to licensing differences between Japan and the U.S., but the end total is still expected to be more than 100. In addition, you can customize and upgrade your cars to the nth degree in the Gran Turismo Mode, a feature that will undoubtedly win over any hard-core racing fan. The possibilities are truly endless, and chances are if you can do it to your car in real life, you can do it in GT. Heck, you can even get your car washed.

GT is split up into two main modes of play—Quick Arcade and Gran Turismo. The Quick Arcade Mode is (obviously) a more arcade-style mode, with Single Race, Time Attack and two-player Battle options. Doing well in the Single Race Mode will net you "Goodies" (like in Motor Toon) which open up some cool extras in the game. The heart of GT, however, lies in the aforementioned Gran Turismo Mode. You can buy (and sell) new and used cars (and rare special editions) at any of the manufacturers on the Central Map Screen. These cars can then be used in any of the various events (GT League, with four different Cups, Special Events, Time Trials and Spot Races) to race for cash. In order to participate in certain events though, you'll need one of three driver's licenses (each progressively more difficult to earn) which can be obtained by taking special driving exams that test your ability to corner, brake and more. Obviously, this is one racer that's going to keep you occupied for a good, long time.

Gran Turismo is due out in May, and will support Sony's new Dual Shock vibrating analog pad, which is likely to be released the same time as the game. If you're a racing fan, you owe it to yourself to check this out—GT is going to be the racing event of 1998.

In terms of overall depth, Gran Turismo could easily be dubbed the "Grand Canyon" of video game racers. This baby's got it all.

In GT Mode, you start out at home with only a few dollars and a dream. Go out and buy your first car!

Two-player simultaneous play is supported via GT's amazingly smooth Split-screen Mode.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
SCEA SISA	1 Action	85	April 1998

Web Address: www.playstation.com

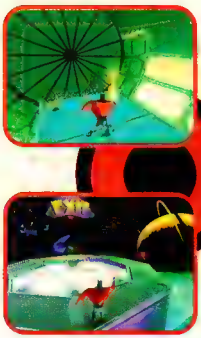
Blasto

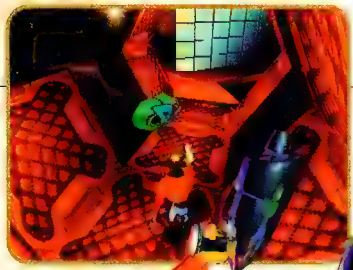
Captain Blasto to the Rescue... Finally

Game delays can be frustrating for us gamers. After seeing a game in *EGM*, thinking it's coming out sometime soon, and then hearing that it has been pushed back another six months, you may think the game isn't worth the wait. Well, in certain instances game delays can mean a more solid product than original versions. In Blasto's case, this is exactly what happened. But even with that, is the game all it's cracked up to be?

The game is set in a dramatically shaded, 3-D alien world. This 3-D world is then broken up into 11 or 12 unique environments. Some areas include a space port, a desert and an alien base. As Captain Blasto works his way through each of the different and thankfully lengthy environments, he encounters more than 30 different types of evil Bosc (the main bad alien dude) henchmen. These rather scrawny (but increasingly dangerous) troops do their damnedest to drop the daring Blasto.

The demise of Blasto won't be an easy task, though, since he has plenty of weapons and moves to combat Bosc's forces with. If he's not grappling onto the edge of a platform, working his way to a power-up, he's pulling out his flamethrower and toasting some alien hide. Other upgrades include heat-seeking missiles, a jetpack, different lasers and a handy pistol-whip technique you can use when you're close enough to a green-faced goon. When the Review Crew gets their hands on this one, we'll let you know if it has been worth the wait.





Phil Hartman's comments gives Blasto his take-no-stank attitude.

How could anyone, especially a curious gamer, resist the temptation of a button that says, "Do Not Press!"?

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release*
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Web Address: [illegible]

Hot Shots Golf

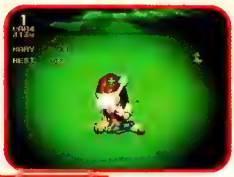
Hot Shots Golf is a realistic game presented in a fun, arcade-like package.

A couple years have passed, and the slate of golf simulations on 32-Bit console systems has been consistently unimpressive. Perhaps what is needed is a golf game that doesn't take itself so seriously. Enter Hot Shots Golf.

Originally created in Japan (where it sold more than a million copies), Hot Shots Golf is a cute game that stresses fun and simplicity over mind-numbing realism. However, this is not to say that there is no merit to the game as a simulation. Although shot power, ball spin, wind and selecting the right club are all important, Hot Shots Golf tries to present them in as painless a way as possible.

The feel of the game is lighthearted, as illustrated by the cartoony golfers and the minigolf holes that are also available. Packed with features, Hot Shots allows players to wage bets on holes, train their golfer, and use six different play modes. One of these is a "VS Mode" that allows you to "acquire" your opponent for play after you beat him or her (there are 10 in all).

With unique features, and the strength of over a million overseas sales behind it, Hot Shots Golf could be the game that makes console golfing fun again.



Awww... poor widdle golfy girl not like her score? Deal with it. It's called life.

As an added bonus, Hot Shots has a Miniature Golf Mode.

More fun than shooting your neighbor's cat.
Point Blank
EMPTY
HIT!
Press the button
Try playing against your opponent!

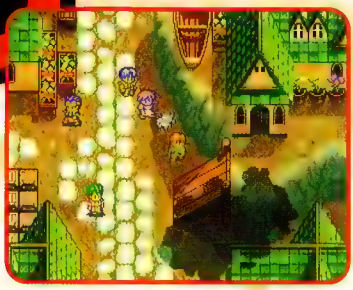
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Working Designs Kadokawa/Game Arts	1 RPG	N/A	August 1998

Web Address: www.workingdesigns.com

Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete

The Sega CD Epic Gets A Facelift

As you can see, there is a border on the anime sequences, but it's much smaller than on the Saturn version.



The upgraded graphics are beautiful, with lots of parallax and an extremely detailed, colorful design.

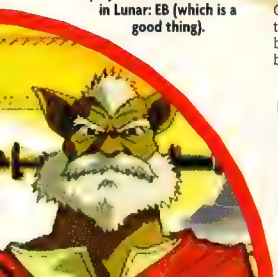
Lunar: The Silver Star for the Sega CD was one of the best 16-Bit RPGs ever released. Unfortunately, because so few people owned Sega CDs, it didn't quite get the publicity it deserved. Now the 32-Bit update which was originally planned for Saturn is coming to the PS courtesy of Working Designs, and it's looking hot.

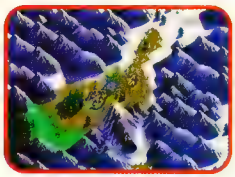
Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete features much-improved graphics and sounds over the original game, not to mention over 45 minutes of near-full-screen animation (it's two CDs now!). The video quality is much higher than that of the Saturn version (only released in Japan), which had a larger border and poor compression. There are quite a few actual gameplay changes as well. Most noticeable is the fact that there are no longer monsters in the overworld, and in dungeons and other areas, you actually see the monsters on the screen before running into them. Battle sequences are more in tune to Lunar: Eternal Blue (the awesome Sega CD sequel), with smarter enemies and a better movement system that makes for more strategic battles.

The battle system has been refined so that it plays out more like it did in Lunar: EB (which is a good thing).

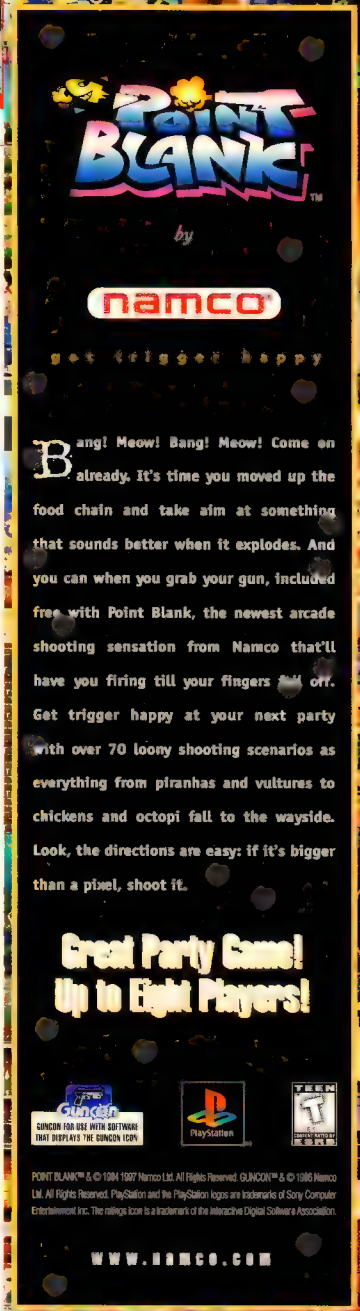
The most intriguing part about Lunar SSS is in the story changes. Besides many areas being altered a bit (like ol' Black Rose St. in Meribia), some areas are now completely gone (the Lighthouse comes to mind), while new ones have surfaced as well. In the original, Luna stayed behind when Alex and co. got on the boat to Meribia—but this time, she actually comes with them, and from there things begin to branch out a bit differently, for an almost entirely new experience.

Working Designs is already hard at work on Lunar SSS, and expects to have the game on store shelves in August, just three months after the Japanese release. Check back next month when we go more in-depth on this potential blockbuster in our huge RPG blowout.





Despite looking much better, the overworld has been shrunk a bit and no longer has random battles.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
SCEA SISA	1-8 Sports	80	March 1998

Web Address: www.playstation.com

NBA ShootOut '98

Better Late Than Never

Tons of new dunks have been added to NBA ShootOut '98, and you might also notice that Shaq is now included.

Arriving uncharacteristically late in the basketball season, Sony is finally ready to give gamers a good look at NBA ShootOut '98. Judging from this preview version of the game, the extra development time has definitely been well spent.

ShootOut '98 already looks better and plays smoother than the previous game. This is in part due to the numerous new player animations (now sporting 30 different dunks) added to the game, but even more-so because of the technical improvements to the polygonal engine. Animations are faster, gameplay is speedier, and the transitions between motion-captured moves are much more fluent, bringing ShootOut '98 closer to mimicking NBA action than it's ever been before.

Sony Interactive also continues to add features to their game to make it cater better to the die-hard basketball fan. Building on the success of the "Icon Passing" system, ShootOut '98 also sports "Icon Cutting." This new system allows players to control cutters, screens and double teams at will. The playbook is also a little beefier, containing nine new offensive and four new defensive plays.

With these said enhancements, NBA ShootOut '98 has a legitimate shot to dethrone EA's NBA Live 98, currently the best console basketball simulation on the PS.

Hakeem Olajuwon adorns the package, and thus you can bet his stats will be juiced.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release

Web Address:

Road Rash 3D

The feeling of asphalt scraping the skin off your knees is about to return, except this time it's in true 3-D. Yep, the Road Rash series finally takes the plunge into the 3-D pool in Road Rash 3D for the PlayStation.

Besides the obvious graphical changes, the game offers a system of interconnecting roads for you to race along. Upon completing one section, a new stretch of road is loaded in front of you so you can effectively continue along the same highway (the game apparently gives 50 miles of road).

Of course, on your way there the game lets you have run-ins with rival gang members (and their interesting outfits) at high speeds. The punches, kicks, whips, chains and overall mayhem of previous Road Rash games is retained, to keep things interesting.

As you watch your enemies flip over their bikes, and land on their skulls, you'll enjoy their fluid animation thanks to Electronic Arts' motion-capture technology. Tumbles, slides and other bodily movements look completely realistic, proving again why there's no need to try this stuff at home.

Unlike its predecessors, Road Rash 3D features a realistic physics engine. When your bike slides during a sharp turn, it behaves according to the properties of that particular curve. And you'll be able to try out those physics with a good number of bikes in four different classes.

Is it just us, or is the guy on the motorcycle to the right wearing some sort of weird, black-leather brazier?

"SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIENDS"
AEROFIGHTERS
ASSAULT
YOU WANT TO BE A HERO? DOGFIGHT BOGIES AND BOMBS OR GO HEAD-TO-HEAD IN TWO-PLAYER COMBAT IN STUNNING GRAPHIC ENVIRONMENTS TO SAVE THE EARTH YET AGAIN. THERE ARE 10 LEVELS OF FAST ACTION THAT DEMAND FAST REACTION. JOIN THE BATTLE IN THE ONLY GAME THAT MATTERS.
KIDS TO ADULTS
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
VIDEO SYSTEM
http://www.dreamsquare.co.jp
Distributed by
VIC TOKAI, INC.
NINTENDO

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Electronic Arts EA Canada	1-8 Sports	40	March 1998

Web Address: www.easports.com

Triple Play 99

EA's Baseball Game Strikes Early

In an effort to get a running start on the competition and the new baseball season, EA is preparing to launch the newest edition of their Triple Play series earlier than ever before. Hopefully, this emphasis on timeliness won't hinder the development on the game. Judging from the early playable version that we have, it doesn't appear to be a problem.

Fans of the Triple Play series will immediately feel at home with the 99 edition. Some of the biggest changes include a faster interface and more intuitive controls. It seems EA is trying to make the game easy to control, while not sacrificing any of the realism or options the game has become known for. While some of this tweaking is accomplished through the streamlining of options, other parts of it are done through incredibly customizable skill levels.

Intelligent cameras attempt to give you the best field of view.

All the stadiums are rendered in intricate detail.

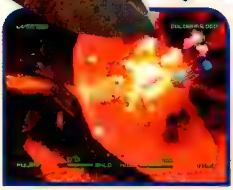
Many aesthetic enhancements have been made, mainly achieved by the addition of new player animations (throw from the knees, running throws and a jumping throw) and smoother transitions between them. EA is also quick to point to their oddly named "Living Stadium Sound," which basically amounts to a lot of crowd chatter, two-man play-by-play commentary and random ballpark announcements.

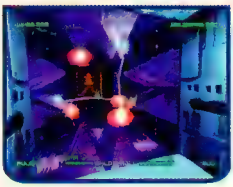
Barring any huge gaffes, this array of subtle improvements to last year's solid (but not without flaws) baseball game should propel Triple Play 99 to the upper echelon of PlayStation baseball games.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
		75	

Web Address:

Forsaken





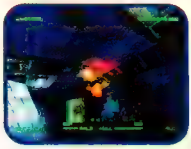
Forsaken has some of the nicest-looking graphics on the PS to date.

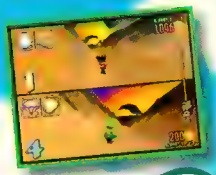
Isn't this always the way: A fusion experiment goes horribly wrong, kills pretty much everyone on the planet, and you're one of the lucky few who survives. Now all you have to do with your free time is go around and take what riches are leftover. Problem is, you're not alone.

The one-player game puts you in the cockpit of one of 16 bikes (each with its own driver). The bikes have various attributes like speed, turning ability and firepower. As you play through each of the 15 cavernous, subway-inspired levels there are plenty of obstacles and enemies that get in your way. Fortunately, that's when your cool-looking weapons come into play.

With over 20 weapons to find, blowing the enemy to bits shouldn't be much of a problem. Whether you use the heat-seeking missiles (complete with a camera mount) or the gravity-altering warheads, the result is the same: a dead bad guy. In addition to the one-player game, there's a Split-screen Two-player Mode for some hardcore deathmatch play. There are eight multiplayer levels to choose from.

All of the aforementioned features combined with a speedy frame-rate and incredible, colored lighting and huge explosion effects make Forsaken on the PlayStation a game to watch out for.





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Over 36 different tricks

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"We're here to tell you that Snowboard Kids is very cool."
-Nintendo Power, Pak Watch, Volume 103

Don't be board this winter!

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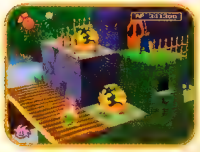
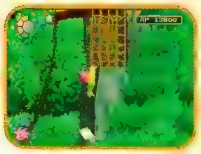
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
SCEA Woopi Camp	1 Action	N/A	3rd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.playstation.com

Tomba

A Different Kind Of 2-D Platformer





There can never be enough original 2-D platform games, and it looks like Tomba is well on its way to becoming one of those. How else could you describe a game whose plot involves trying to rescue a keepsake from a band of evil pigs?

Goofy plot aside, Tomba is a side-scrolling platform game that meshes 2-D and 3-D graphics together in a slick, colorful package. Your character freely moves throughout the foregrounds and backgrounds of levels, and when the terrain gets rough, he can often scale obstacles to get himself out of trouble. 3-D ledges, obstacles, buildings and plants sway, move and react to Tomba's movements as he climbs about the level, giving the game a distinct look.

Unsurprisingly, the combat is very strange—Tomba dispatches his enemies by leaping onto their backs, then somersaulting them into submission. Feisty opposition can be first stunned with Tomba's mace before he does the deadly pounce. There are plenty of different baddies to get rid of, and doing so often rewards Tomba with a variety of fruits and items.

It's good to see more 2-D platformers on the PlayStation. Such revelations can only please old-school gamers who wish to see such a loved genre revitalized.

Jumping on items then bashing them provides plenty of goodies.

Tomba is a beautifully vivid platform game that deftly combines 2-D and 3-D graphics.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
		TBD	

Web Address:

MLB 99

MLB 99's Heads-Up-Display looks identical to last year's.

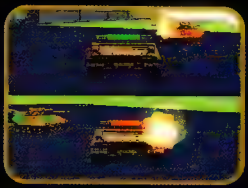
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
MGM Interactive Silent Software	1-2 Action	N/A	3rd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.mgminteractive.com

Return Fire 2

The sequel to the console hit is finally coming to the PlayStation in late summer/early fall this year. The main difference between this one and the first is that Return Fire 2 is in true 3-D. So does the flip over to an "in-the-action" view work? It's too early to tell, but what we do know is that this sequel puts you in the driver's seat of one of several different vehicles, in an array of locales. The vehicles include: A tank, a jump jet, an attack chopper and a good, old-fashioned Army Jeep. Terrains range from a barren, icy tundra to the hot sands of a desert, and most others in between. Also expect a Head-to-head Mode where you can blow up your pals. Keep an eye in *EGM* for updates.

Return Fire 2 has a revamped look and a whole new style of play compared to the first one.



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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Working Designs SCEI/Alpha Systems	1-2 Light Gun	N/A	April 1998

Web Address: www.workingdesigns.com

Elemental Gearbolt

The story unfolds through between-level anime sequences that are extremely well done.

Working Designs' next PlayStation title came as a bit of a surprise to us. No, it's not an RPG or a shooter. It's not even a strategy title. Actually, it's Elemental Gearbolt, the Sony Computer Ent. (of Japan) light-gun game that was recently released in Japan.

Elemental Gearbolt does actually incorporate some RPG elements to its play, but obviously the base of the game is hardcore shooting action. There are several stages of play, broken up by anime sequences that explain the story. In each stage, the object is to (obviously) kill as many enemies as possible before they kill you, while freeing special fairies that are trapped inside green crystals throughout each area. At the end of a stage, after defeating one of the game's many awesome Bosses, you have the option to use your points toward your high score or your experience level (which, when raised, allows you to grow stronger). Your character (or characters—you can play with two people at once) can use three different weapons, each with its own unique abilities.

From what we've played of EG so far, we're quite impressed. The game just oozes with atmosphere, from the incredible graphics to the mystifying soundtrack. The game supports Namco's GunCon (as well as any other licensed PS light gun), and will also support Sony's Analog Pad for those without guns. Watch for it this April—it's going to be another hot WD title.

After each level you can adjust your reward to get either more bonus points or more experience points.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release*
Activision Luxoflux	1-2 Action	90	Nov. 1998

Web Address: www.activision.com

Vigilante 8

We've been waiting for a better-looking Twisted Metal-type game, and Vigilante 8 may be the answer. This is Activision's '70s muscle car version of the popular car combat games by SCEA.

All around, this preview version of V-8 looks better than the Twisted Metals. Everything from the textures to the animation looks more realistic. Beyond that, the basic idea (drive around and shoot everything in sight) is the same. Each of the 12 cars has a basic machine gun, as well as a special weapon. For example, the camper truck is equipped with an arsenal of killer bees, while the school bus shoots out toxic fumes.

We're pretty excited about this great-looking game. As we get more on it, we'll keep you updated.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
VR Sports VR Sports	1-2 Sports	N/A	April 1998

Web Address: www.interplay.com

VR Baseball '99

Attempting to improve on last year's 3-D polygonal effort, VR Baseball '99 promises to have a faster frame-rate, better graphics and smoother gameplay.

New, more detailed player models coupled with a larger library of motions should give the boys of summer a more realistic look overall. In addition, stadiums have been retooled to display richer colors and a deeper 3-D appearance.

Five play modes include: Exhibition, Season, Playoff, Home Run Derby and Batting Practice. Look for create-a-player with a custom uniform option as well as updated rosters for the '98 season. As the team manager you will also be allowed to trade, sign and re-order rosters as you go along.

There's no doubt that the baseball genre has become very crowded in the last year. Let's hope VR Baseball '99 can make a strong showing among the heavy-hitting competition.

PSYGNOSIS

A game developed by people with racing in their blood.

The French sure know how to drive.

I sure hope Santa brings us a new turbocharger!

Christian makes us proud, again.

Granny can get that chair moving!

Rex - our team dog.

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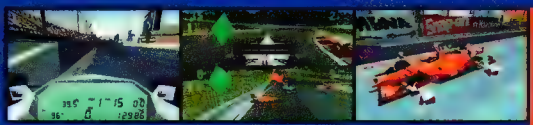

PlayStation

NEWMAN HAAS RACING

a winning indy car tradition

No tearful hugs. No warm handshakes. Just half a pound of buckshot to the chest. Or a railroad-size spike in the cranium. That's how you say good-bye to a friend. Introducing Quake for the N-64. With single-player mode and a two-player death match. Because after all, nothing says you care like a load of screaming hot steel in somebody's torso.

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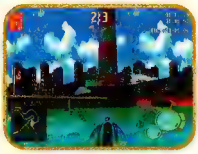
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
VR Sports Promethean Design	1-2 Racing	70	April 1998

Web Address: www.vrsports.com

Power Boat Racing



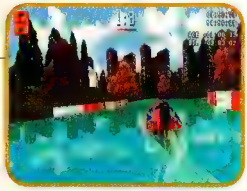
The varying environments make for some interesting, watery encounters.

When virtually every other type of sporty video game has been done, there isn't much left for a company that wants to make something new and different. This could very well be why Interplay is releasing Powerboat Racing in their VR Sports line.

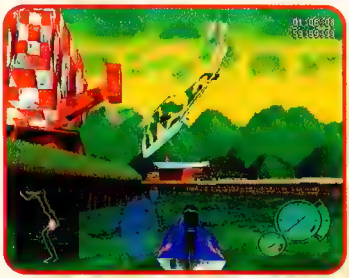
The game is pretty straightforward. You control one of many powerboats, in both Monohull and Catamaran styles, on nine watery tracks. The tracks are set in major cities in different parts of the world. To throw a little action into the mix, obstacles like great white sharks, logs and floating cabs litter the waterways. Of course, the competition, whether it's the game's AI players or one of your pals, offers intense play.

As you make your way down each course, weaving in, out and around walls and tunnels, your second lap may have you stumbling from first to third place. While racing, some levels will actually change slightly in design. What was a straight-away before is now a tunnel veering off in another direction (then reconnecting with the original course).

When you make tight turns or splash down from a ramp, you might just get the feeling of really being in a boat. These sinking feelings would be due to Powerboat Racing's real physics model that calculates speed, mass, motion and resistance of your craft in the water.



The game's still in its early stages, but even now the frame-rate is on the speedy side.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Acclaim Acclaim Studios	1-2 Sports	60	July 1998

Web Address: www.acclaimnation.com

WWF War Zone

In case you haven't noticed, pro wrestling is a hot ticket right now. WWF War Zone is the latest contender from Acclaim.

War Zone is a 3-D polygonal wrestling game. It has 13 selectable wrestlers (and a few secret ones), including Mankind, the Undertaker, Shawn Michaels, the British Bulldog and Bret Hart (who has moved on to the WCW—when the licensing deal was first sealed, Bret Hart was still with the WWF). War Zone will also allow you to create your own character. You can customize everything, from the face and build to the colorful tights. Each of the ringed warriors will have over 60 moves (some common, some signature).

WWF War Zone has several modes of play: Training, One-on-one, Tag Team, Cage, Ladder and Weapon Matches. The game, unfortunately, will only support two players. "There aren't enough multitaps out there—only about 20,000 or so—to make it worth it," said Thomas Bass, marketing coordinator at Acclaim. "We would have to delay the game another month to put in four-player support." Too bad.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Mankyshine Int. Chicanery Ltd.	1-2 Action/Shooter	41	April 1998

Web Address: www.chicanery.com

Astrod 2000

It's an age-old rule: Every yesteryear hit must be updated for today's systems. Now the arcade classic Astrod is finally getting its due.

The basic premise hasn't changed from the 1981 hit. In Astrod 2000, you must save our world from impending doom by destroying huge astrods that are bearing down on our planet. Be warned: Shooting big astrods will only break them up into many smaller astrods. Small astrods are just as dangerous as big ones but are much harder to hit.

Astrod 2000 offers many different ships to choose from. You can pick the fast and agile Stryker (which is a modern version of the original ship, and bears an uncanny resemblance to the old Star Trek badges worn by the Starfleet members). Or you can pick the hulking Ramrod, which is heavy on armor and power but light on speed and mobility. You can also customize your ships by purchasing various upgrades. By completing each mission, you can earn credits to buy better armor, engines or weapons (like the Astrod Drill—useful for taking out astrods from behind).

This game has gorgeous hi-res graphics with all the trimmings—60 FPS action, light shading, etc. It's in complete 3-D with full freedom of movement. If you want to learn more about this hot title, check out the arcade titles at Wal-Mart.

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ANCIENT SECRETS AND A RUTHLESS PLOT TO RESHAPE THE WORLD

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Acclaim Acclaim Studios	1 Action/Adventure	75	April 1998

Web Address: www.acclaimnation.com

Batman & Robin

Something a Little Different, Old Chum...

A Batman game wouldn't be a Batman game without thugs.

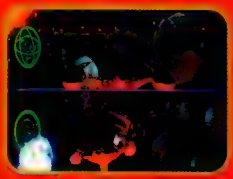
It's no secret that the pages of nearly any comic book, or the scenes from most action movies can be transformed into the good guys, bad guys and story line of a video game. The hard part is to take either of those entertainment vehicles and make them into a *good* game. Batman & Robin from Acclaim could very well be one of those transfigurations done well, but it's too early to say for sure since we don't yet have a playable version.

We can pass on what we know about the game though. Batman & Robin puts you into the crime-fighting shoes of either (you guessed it) Batman or Robin. Of course, the game based on the big-screen movie wouldn't be complete if you couldn't control the ever-luscious Batgirl. On top of the good guys, look for plenty of Mr. Freeze's cryo-chumps and Poison Ivy's screwed-up plant zombies to take down as you work your way through the game.

You should be advised that this one isn't just about fighting though. Besides the standard use of various kung-fu techniques and "wonderful toys," the Caped Crusader and his chums can drive around in the Batmobile (as well as other vehicles from the film) and do some hardcore investigating. Making a stop at the Batcave will help decipher some of the clues you pick up in Gotham City. Plus, since the game incorporates adventure into the action, you can change characters at any point during the game.

StarCon

The Star Control franchise has long been revered as one of the best action/adventure series of games on the PC. In an effort to tailor StarCon for the PlayStation, Accolade has placed an emphasis on combat, not adventure for the fourth and latest installment in the long-running series.



Old-school Star Control fans needn't worry, as they will find the game's 3-D surroundings recognizable–StarCon has many of the aliens found in previous adventures. Players can assume control of a host of races, and then battle rival Alliances in 3-D combat to earn promotions, gain technologies and upgrade ships. Two-player competitive and cooperative battle will be available, which has been a cornerstone of past Star Control games.

Taking this series into a different direction is a bold move, and while it may make some fans a little weary initially, Accolade could easily sway them if the new-look StarCon turns out to be a solid game.

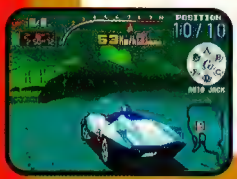
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release

Web Address:

Speed Racer

This game is very much a slice of the original cartoon it came from. An extended intro complete with scenes and music from the old series sets the stage for a healthy dose of Speed Racer nostalgia.

Reminiscent of Rage Racer, Speed Racer offers three courses complete with expandable tracks and pretty scenery to race through. Gradual shifts from day to night are also present and add depth to the unique racing environments. The "Mach One" is equipped with its trademark gizmos: the Auto Jack (jumping), Frogger (underwater maneuvering), Evening Eye, Defencer, Chopper (personal favorite) and the Belt tire. These items come in handy on the secret shortcuts and alternate routes sprinkled throughout the courses. Cutting down a lane of trees with the Chopper or driving underwater using the "frogger" option is all in a day's work for this high-speed racer. Fans of the series as well as speed freaks should enjoy this upcoming driving title for the PlayStation.



PlayStation

PSYGNOSIS

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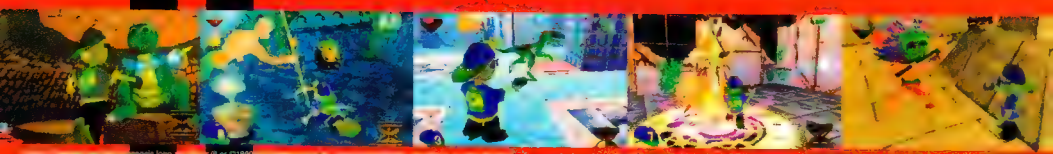
Travellers Tales

GIVE HISTORY A WEDGIE

Historical fact guys are screaming, [illegible] is a greedy kid called Rascal. He's on a mission to rescue his dad [illegible] in the Timeworld. As he leaves through time, he'll explore 18 different [illegible] past, present and future. He'll also have to [illegible] within worlds that display "... some of the most impressive 3D graphics in a PlayStation game..." (Next Generation). So keep your [illegible] open. And [illegible] watch your backs.

RASCAL

3-D ACTION ADVENTURE GAME



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PLAYSTATION

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Crave Entertainment Crave	1 RPG	N/A	4th Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.cravegames.com

Shadow Madness

We don't have much more than screenshots and a story line on this upcoming RPG from Crave Entertainment entitled Shadow Madness. From what we gather, the game puts you in the adventuring shoes of Stinger as he searches for answers in his dying world. A strange disease is spreading over his land, driving its victims into insanity and eventually killing them. As hundreds die from the disease, and strange beasts carry it from town to town, Stinger meets up with other warriors in an attempt to stop this destruction. As you visit prerendered areas, and more magic, weapons and technologies are found, the mystery unfolds. We'll have more info on this one as it progresses.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
[illegible]	[illegible]	100	[illegible]

Web Address: www.hudson.co.jp

Nectaris

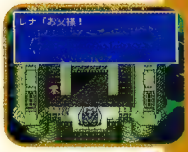
What's with all the remakes these days? Some of you (most of you, I hope) may remember the classic TurboGrafx-16 strategy title, Military Madness. The game drew a fairly large cult following, but never saw a sequel here due to the untimely demise of the TG16. Now, Hudson is re-releasing the game (known as Nectaris in Japan) for the PlayStation with a major graphical revamp (it's completely polygonal now) and many additions to play. Not only are there more maps (besides the 16 original ones, there are a total of 88 new ones!), but you can make your own ones with the new Construction Mode. Hudson has also hinted that a new Two-player Mode is hidden away in the game. Sounds cool!

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

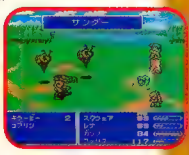
Web Address: [illegible]

Final Fantasy V



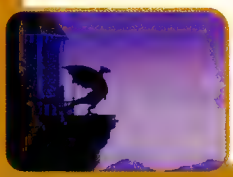
We all knew it was going to happen sooner or later. With last year's rerelease of Final Fantasy IV for the PlayStation in Japan (our Final Fantasy II), it was just a matter of time before Square announced a PS rerelease of FFV. Well, here it is. Like FFIV, the only addition to the game is the all-new opening and ending FMV sequences (what we've seen so far looks fantastic), but still—the game itself, despite being 6 years old, is incredible.

The characters in the cinemas are reflective of designer Yoshitaka Amano's beautiful style.



Final Fantasy V is widely believed to be the best all-around game of the series, despite the now-dated graphics and sounds. The gameplay is similar to FFIV and FFVI (our II and III, respectively), but the core of it all is the Job/Ability system (which is now used in Final Fantasy Tactics, ironically). By finding special pieces of the four elemental Crystals, your party can obtain the souls of past warriors ("Jobs") and utilize their talents in battle. By learning their Abilities, and then mixing and matching with others, you can customize your team in an unimaginable number of ways.

With a FANTASTIC story, great gameplay and equally amazing music, it's quite a surprise that this episode of the FF series never made it to the U.S. The PS version may not compare to FFVII in overall aesthetics and presentation, but the gameplay is unmatched, and no RPG fan should have to miss it. We strongly encourage Sony, Square—ANYONE to bring this title to the U.S. (market it as a "classic" or something). If you're a fan, definitely write to the above companies—this is probably the last chance of a U.S. FFV release we'll ever have.



The already awesome opening scene is now even better, thanks to Square's amazing CG artists.

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.

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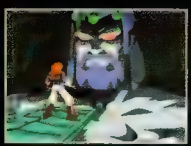
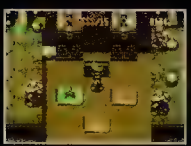

PlayStation

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BULLS 71
PACERS 62

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NBA SHOOTOUT 98

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www.playstation.com

- Harley Davidson & L.A. Riders
- Time Crisis 2
- Hyperdrive

In Arcade News...

A lot of cool new titles debuted at the ATEI (Amusement Trade Exhibition International) in England this year. Worthy games seen at the show, but not previewed in this issue include: Namco's Motocross Go (dirt-bike simulator) and Rapid River, Sega Rally 2 (which runs on two Model 3 boards and controls awesome)

and Konami's long-awaited Racing Jam on Cobra hardware. This is a taste of what will be seen at ASI (Amusement Showcase International) '98 and other shows this year. Other longshot hopefuls for upcoming shows include Street Fighter EX 2 (shown above, featuring BLANKA!), Street Fighter Alpha 3 and Namco's follow-up to Soul Edge called Soul Caliber. We'll give updates on these hot sequels as we receive new information.

More Than Your Typical Motorcycle Racing Game...

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega of America Sega of Japan	1-4 (via link) Driving	100	Now

Web Address: www.sega.com

Harley Davidson & L.A. Riders

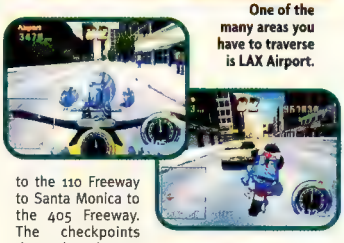
The first game to utilize Sega's new Model 3 Step 2 board is also a game that commemorates Harley-Davidson's 95th anniversary.

Harley Davidson and L.A. Riders allows you to choose from five classic bikes: the FLSTF Fatboy, FL Panhead 1948, FXDWG Dyna Wide Glide, XL 1200S Sportster 1200 Sport and a Police Motorcycle. The controls on the bikes are simple enough and set up quite a bit like a real ride. The gear shift buttons are located on the left handle bar above the handle grip. There are two brakes: a hand brake located on the right handle bar and a foot brake just above the lower-right platform.

As far as gameplay is concerned, the objective is simple enough: to complete the number of checkpoints in the allotted time. The distance between checkpoints determines how much time you're given. The player must find the shortest routes while collecting Harley points along the way. Successful completion of all checkpoints will get the player on the ranking board, provided you have more points than the lowest-ranking player on that machine.

Harley takes place in a perfect CG rendering of Los Angeles. The game starts you off at the bikers' shack, where you choose your ride and transmission. At this point, the computer randomly selects the first checkpoint you must reach. If you reach the first check, the computer will select your next destination and so on (along each route are bonus point icons: spinning green Harley logos that vary in value from 1,000 to 10,000 points—collecting these icons is what ultimately gets you on the leader board).

The key to HD & L.A. Riders is the unpredictability of the computer picking out your checkpoint destinations. One game course may be from the biker shack to LAX to Beverly Hills to Santa Monica to the 405 Freeway. The next game course may be from the biker shack to Beverly Hills to LAX to the 110 Freeway to Santa Monica to the 405 Freeway. The checkpoints themselves have an element of surprise, too. Sometimes the points are not where they were in a previous game. There are also shortcuts in the game where you can make up some time and find more points.



One of the many areas you have to traverse is LAX Airport.

The two-player experience is interesting as well. Players start at the same location and head for the same checkpoints. At any point, the players may break off and choose the path they feel is the quickest route and has the most point icons along the way.

Harley Davidson and L.A. Riders is an excellent title to launch Sega's new board with. The game sets a new standard for all future simulations.

HD & L.A. Riders offers a perfect CG rendering of Los Angeles.

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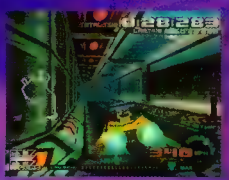


Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Namco Namco	1-2 Light Gun	65	2nd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.namco.com

Time Crisis 2

An Interactive Two-Player Gun Game

The best gun game to date is arguably the original Time Crisis. It offered all the graphics and fun of the Virtua Cop series at a faster pace and made reloading strategic with the use of a foot pedal. This innovative feature not only reloaded your weapon, it also made you duck for cover to avoid incoming fire (but because of the time limit, you couldn't hide forever). The upcoming sequel has the same foot pedal feature but also gives you much, much more.

Time Crisis 2 offers a new innovative feature of its own: a dual monitor two-player cabinet (you can still play a normal one-player game of course, but the two-player option is much cooler). When two people play TC2, each has his or her independent view of the action. At certain times, you'll even take separate paths and catch enemies in a crossfire! Yet another feature offered only on Namco games (including the ever-popular Point Blank) is a recoiling pistol. Nothing quite makes shooting bad guys more realistic.

TC2 has four stages including a special mode where you are given a machine gun to help take down tough targets like tanks. Yet another stage is a train where you and your partner chase down and have a firefight with a Boss. You eventually make your way to the roof where the baddie catches a ride with a killer gunship. TC2 is also very cinematic, with a really cool story line; it's a definite improvement over the original in this respect. Look for it to hit second quarter this year.

You are able to see the other player during the game. No split screen!

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release*
Midway Midway	1-8 (via link) Driving	N/A	2nd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.midway.com

Hyperdrive

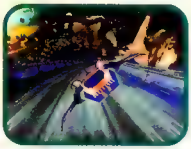
All of the vehicles in Hyperdrive have a NASCAR look and feel to them. Unfortunately there are no weapons in the game.

What the Hyperdrive team is trying to capture is essentially "Daytona in space"—a futuristic lap-based racing game with an emphasis on flying and banking.

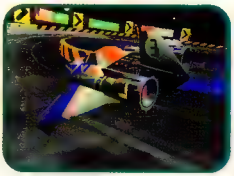
Hyperdrive has three vehicles to choose from, one for each difficulty level: Beginner, Advanced and Expert. The beginner ship handles very much like a car, with a strong "auto-pilot" to keep you level to the track. The expert ship allows fast, steep banking and power-slides.

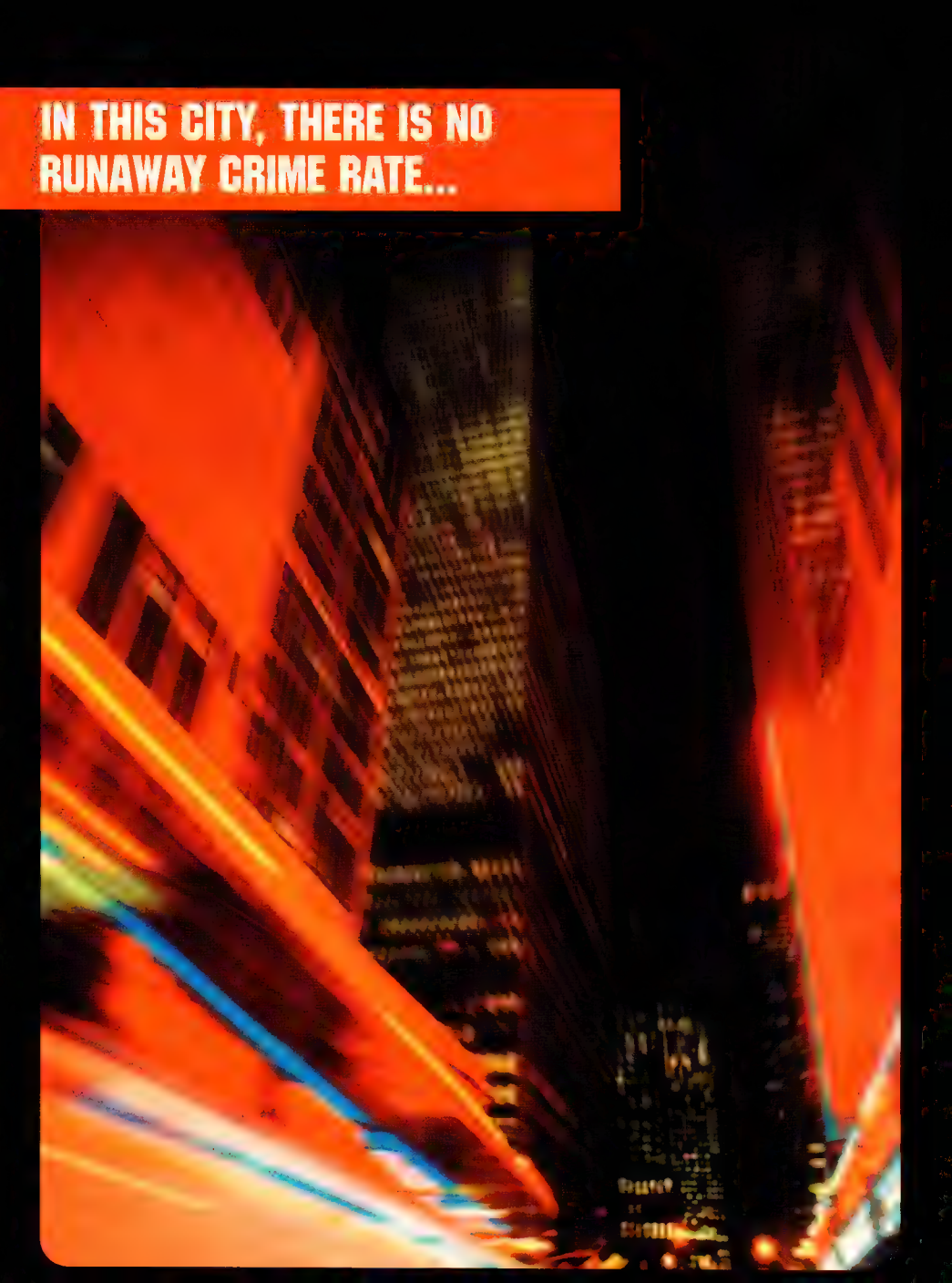
The controls are a far-advanced version of the Star Wars (the Vector graphics classic from the '80s) X-Wing grip, with handles that move forward and back (to raise your vehicle up and down) as well as left and right. The lower you are to the track, the faster you will go.

Hyperdrive's three tracks are very diverse and offer an awesome view of Martian landscapes. The Beginner track is essentially an "Indy 500" in outer space near Earth's orbit, a simple oval. Advanced is an asteroid mining facility. It introduces basic track obstacles that require flying up/down and banking left/right. Expert is a deep-space outpost. It includes corkscrews, ramps and vertical drops. There will be hidden shortcuts in the game, and the tracks include completely interactive background objects. For example, in the asteroid mining facility, debris floats onto the track and hits your craft (this will not hinder gameplay, however, it's only there for a cool show).



Hyperdrive utilizes the same 3DFX system as Midway's arcade hit, NFL Blitz, but with a faster processor. The game will be a stand-alone cabinet or will offer a minimum of four linked machines. Hyperdrive will debut at this year's ASI show in Vegas.

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Developed by:

PIXELOGIC

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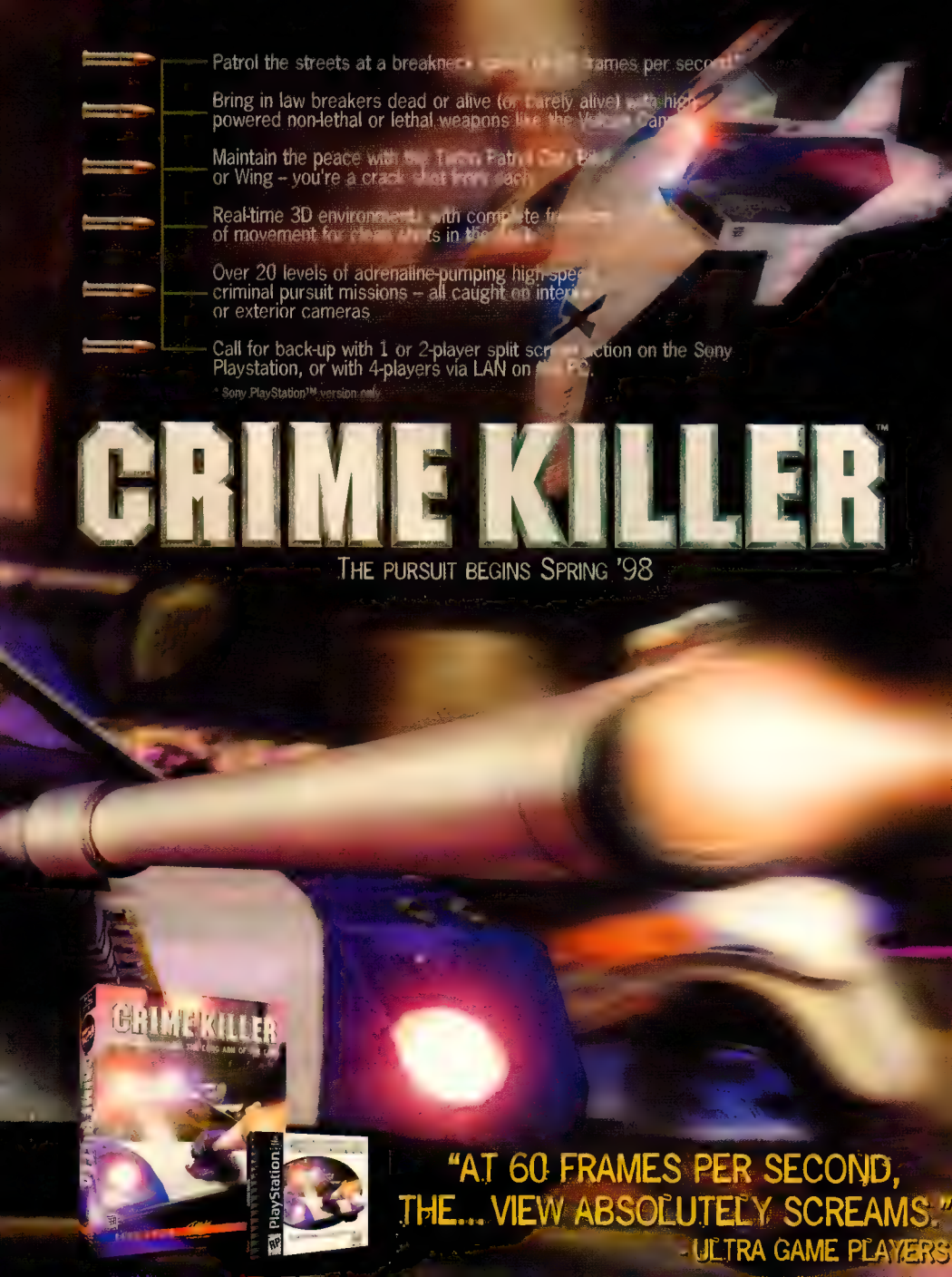
Patrol the streets at a breakne[illegible] frames per second*
Bring in law breakers dead or alive (or barely alive) with high-powered non-lethal or lethal weapons like the Volcan Can[illegible]
Maintain the peace with the Turbo Patrol Car, Bike or Wing – you're a crack shot from each
Real-time 3D environments with complete fr[illegible] of movement for clean shots in the [illegible]
Over 20 levels of adrenaline-pumping high-spe[illegible] criminal pursuit missions – all caught on inter[illegible] or exterior cameras
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Compiled by: John Stockhausen

PLAYSTATION

Batman & Robin	Acclaim	April	Action
Blast Radius	Psygnosis	April	Shooter
Breath of Fire 3	Capcom	April	RPG
Crime Killer	Interplay	April	Action
Elemental Gearbolt	Working Designs	April	Shooter
Forsaken	Acclaim	April	Action
Grand Theft Auto	ASC Games	April	Action
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 98	Acclaim	April	Sports
Master of Monsters	Ascii	April	Action
MLB Baseball 99	Sony Computer Entertainment	April	Sports
Point Blank	Namco	April	Shooter
San Francisco Rush	Midway	April	Racing
Tactics Ogre	Atlus	April	Strategy
Tekken 3	Namco	April	Fighting
Theme Hospital	EA	April	Simulation
VR Baseball 99	Interplay	April	Sports
VR Sports Powerboat Racing	Interplay	April	Sports
Warhammer 2: Dark Omen	EA	April	Strategy
Wreckin' Crew	Sir Tech	April	Action
Adidas Power Soccer 98 WC	Psygnosis	May	Sports
Azure Dreams	Konami	May	RPG
C	Konami	May	Action
Einhander	Sony Computer Entertainment	May	Shooter
Granstream	T*HQ	May	RPG
Megaman Nova	Capcom	May	Action
Vigilante 8	Activision	May	Action
WarGames	MGM Interactive	May	Action
X Men vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	May	Fighting
Bass Masters Classic: PE	T*HQ	June	Sports
Cardinal SYN	Sony Computer Entertainment	June	Fighting
HardBall 6	Accolade	June	Sports
Heart of Darkness	Interplay	June	Act/Adv
Hot Shots Golf	Sony Computer Entertainment	June	Sports
Moto Racer 2	EA	June	Racing
Populous: The Third Coming	EA	June	Strategy
Salvation	Psygnosis	June	Action
Silhouette Mirage	Working Designs	June	Action

Hmmm...a Turkish Bath. We're not sure if this is a job for the Caped Crusader, but there are plenty of other things for him to do in the upcoming PlayStation title, Batman & Robin.

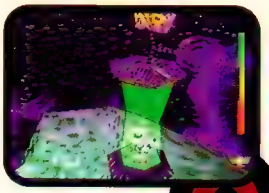
Featuring many of the same characters as the PC hit Interstate '76, Vigilante 8 for the PlayStation lets you duke it out in environments ranging from the barren southwest to the busy streets of a big city.

NINTENDO 64

1080 Snowboarding	Nintendo	April	Sports
NBA Courtside	Nintendo	April	Sports
Virtual Chess	Titus	April	Simulation
All-Star BB 99	Acclaim	May	Sports
Deadly Arts	Konami	May	Fighting
Mike Piazza's StrikeZone	GT Interactive	May	Sports
MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr.	Nintendo	May	Sports
Quest 64	T*HQ	May	RPG
Rackin' Balls	Acclaim	May	Racing
Cruis'n World	Nintendo	June	Racing
Forsaken	Acclaim	June	Action
Gex: Enter the Gecko	Midway	June	Action
Mission: Impossible	Ocean	June	Action
Wetrix	Ocean	June	Puzzle

GAME BOY

Harvest Moon	Natsume	April	RPG

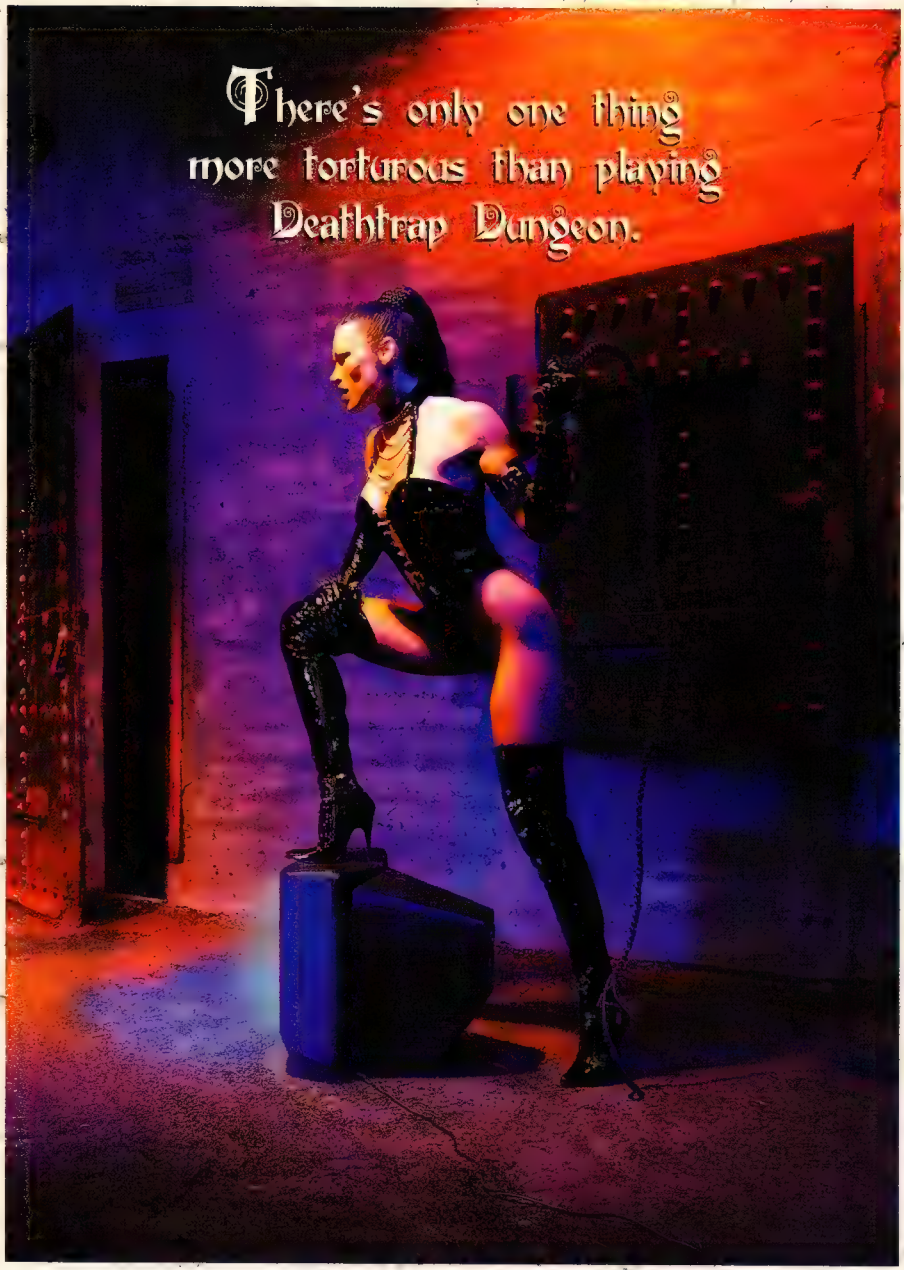


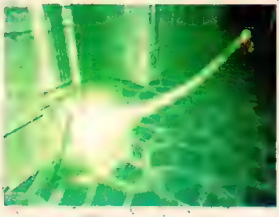
The wise-cracking Gex is making the jump from the PlayStation to the N64 sometime in June. Take a look to see what scores the PlayStation version of Enter the Gecko received in this month's Review Crew.

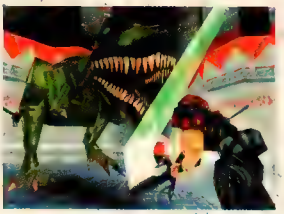
All-Star Baseball 99 will feature Iguana's new quagmire engine as well as impressive high-res graphics. Over a hundred real players' faces were modeled for the game. Can you tell who this guy is?

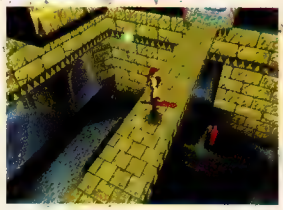
SATURN

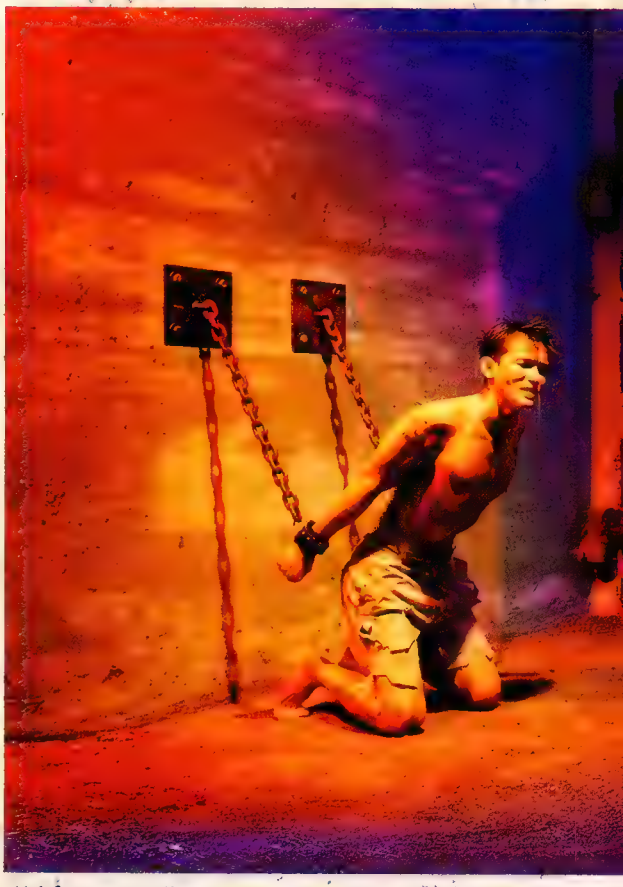
Magic Knight Ray Earth	Working Designs	April	RPG
Burning Rangers	Sega	May	Action
Shining Force 3	Sega	May	RPG


There's only one thing
more torturous than playing
Deathtrap Dungeon.









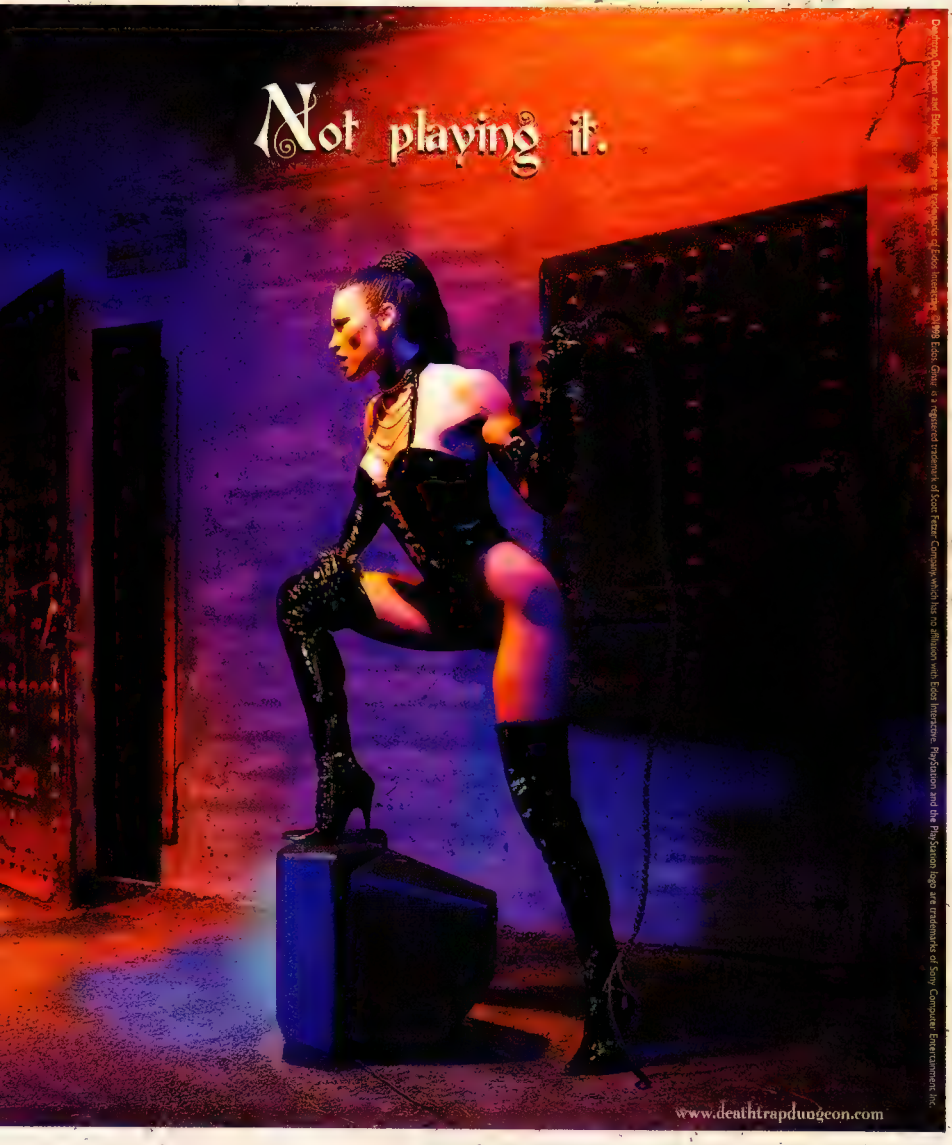
PC CD

PlayStation

IAN LIVINGSTONE'S

DEATHTRAP Dungeon

"Beat me. Whip me. Just don't hit that Quit button." Consider it your battle cry. Then bring on the skeletal warriors, zombies and over 50 other undead denizens. Each one is a chance to slice and dice like a Ginsu knife gone bad. An opportunity to master the 13 death implements at


Not playing it.
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your disposal. Or play the PC version and leave the other on-line players crying for more. Because in these 10 cavernous levels of evil traps, it's all about blurring that fine line between pleasure and pain. And just when you think you can't take it any longer, consider the alternative.

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
You've been warned.

TEKKEN 鉄拳 TRIUMPHANT

By Crispin Boyer

Think of it as a math problem. How do you cram a System 12 game—Namco's arcade version of Tekken 3—into the PlayStation, a console based on System 11 hardware? Since System 12 gear has more RAM than the PlayStation and can display higher-resolution textures and push more polygons, Namco was faced with an unthinkable solution: the first home Tekken title that would not be better than arcade perfect.

But the Tekken 3 development team isn't about to settle for a second-rate translation of Namco's flagship fighter—and, no doubt, neither are the more than 3 million PS owners who bought Tekken 2. With a conversion time of eight months (much longer than the easier porting process of the previous Tekkens), Tekken 3 is expected to hit U.S. stores on April 30, and in Japan March 26, with its gameplay and visuals fully intact. "We don't think there needs to be a sacrifice," said Hajime Nakatani, producer of the Tekken series. "Our goal is to create a PlayStation version of Tekken 3 that will satisfy players who are familiar with the arcade version in terms of both gameplay and graphics. Needless to say, this is our biggest challenge on this project."

And so far it looks like Namco has met that challenge; Tekken 3 is right on track for a nearly flawless translation. The drop in polygon count and background detail is nearly imperceptible, thanks to coding efforts that are squeezing every ounce of power from Sony's system. "We believe we are pushing the PlayStation to its absolute limit with Tekken 3," Nakatani said.

Development on the console version began immediately after Namco completed the arcade game early last year. Other than a few personnel changes, the Tekken 3 team is the same group of artists and programmers who created the home and arcade versions of Tekken 1 and 2. This group has worked exclusively on the Tekken series, while other Namco games have their own, independent development teams. So it's no surprise then that Tekken 3 will come with all the Namco extras we've seen in the console prequels: Practice Mode, CG movies, etc. (see the Sure Things sidebar for more Tekken 3 nitty-gritty). But more importantly, we're seeing a sequel that packs improvements where they're needed the most.

So what if it's the first Tekken that's not arcade perfect. When Tekken 3 hits the PlayStation on April 30, it'll still be the best in the series.

Art By Peter Franco

All the Right Moves

Aside from its punched-up poly count and enhanced lighting effects, what really makes the Tekken 3 coin-op and PlayStation version superior to previous Tekkens are the tweaks to its fighting engine. The most obvious additions are the ability to side-step and the new throws made possible by this tactic. Other features are more subtle. Fighters can now perform quick recovery rolls the instant they're knocked down, or they can briefly supercharge their limbs for an extra jolt of blocking damage. Certain characters can even perform insults.

But by far the most welcome additions are the reversal blocks slipped into each fighter's already enormous arsenal of moves. One of the most common gripes about Tekken 2 was that only a few characters could perform reversal attacks. Now, all fighters have reversals of one type or another. Most common are reversal blocks which—when timed correctly—stop an opponent's attack and cause damage at the same time.

It's a given that every move, counter and combo will make it into the PlayStation version, but what about new, console-exclusive moves? "No plans at the moment," Nakatani said, "but I can't say that we won't make some changes in the end." Whether we see these extras or not, one thing is certain—fireballs will forever be off limits in a Tekken game. "We want the Tekken series to represent only pure fighting," Nakatani said. "That's why we never planned on projectile attacks in the game."

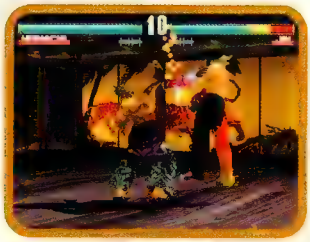
Character Assassination

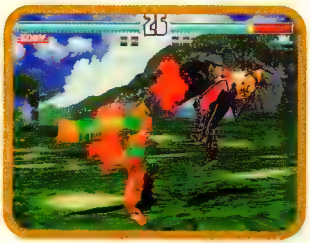
While Tekken 3 features more moves and deeper gameplay, several characters are notably MIA. Gone are the individual Boss opponents that each fighter faced in Tekken 1 and 2 (these mid-Bosses became playable after you beat them in the console prequels). "For Tekken 3, we decided to focus on creating depth and added playability to the characters in the game, rather than simply adding a lot of Bosses," Nakatani said. "We think this creates a more well-rounded challenge. We have no plans to add Bosses to the PlayStation version either."

But that doesn't mean Tekken 3's roster is light. Counting the coin-op's time-release characters and the PlayStation-exclusive dino Gon, the PlayStation version will pack at least 19 characters—compared to 24 in Tekken 2. Nakatani hinted that more surprise characters may be in store. As of press time, we're still not sure how the coin-op's time-release characters will be accessed in the PlayStation version, since they no longer take the form of mid-Bosses.

Since much of the Tekken series' story is told by the home versions' CG finales, many of the cliffhanger details of Tekken 2 are still in the air. For instance, have we seen the last of Tekken 2 bad boy Kazuya Mishima? "We don't want to give away the end of the story," Nakatani said, "but I don't think that we are ready to say goodbye to Kazuya yet." And what about Jun, who according to Tekken mythos was supposedly

For *EGM*'s complete interview with Tekken series producer Hajime Nakatani, check our Web site, www.videogames.com.





Motion capturing was used for 30 percent of the game's moves—mainly for Eddy and Jin.

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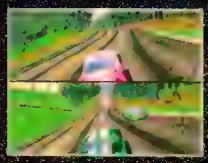
You love playing San Francisco Rush in the arcades. Well, now you can race through the streets of the Bay Area in the comfort of your



own living room. In fact, you'll be able to choose from six different tracks (three more than in the arcade version). Each one showing

authentic San Francisco landscapes and so many places to catch air that you might be mistaken for an unidentified flying object. And if that's

not enough, you can take shortcuts through open fields and underground sewers. You can soar over building tops or be catapulted into the

San Francisco RUSH
EXTREME RACING

DESIGNED FOR N64 RUMBLE PAK

air from a dismantled freeway overpass. It's San Francisco Rush. And lucky for you it's coming home in a more manageable size.

MIDWAY

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killed by new mega-Boss Ogre, a.k.a. the God of Fighting? Again, Nakatani didn't offer any spoilers. "You'll have to play to the end of Tekken 3 and watch all the movies to see if there's anything about Jun," he said.

Although young Jin Kazama is the star of Tekken 3's story line, it is perpetually moving Eddie Gordo who's the current fan favorite. Like every other character in the game, Gordo is the brainchild of Namco's artists, who actually dreamed up the Brazilian fighter long before work began on the third installment of the Iron Fist tournament. "Eddie Gordo uses the Capoeira style of martial arts that was developed in Brazil," Nakatani said. "We originally thought of having a Capoeira fighter back when we were working on Tekken 2 because it is so unique and different from other fighting styles."

And that's really what the Tekken series is about—varied real-world martial arts pumped out by a rapid-fire fighting engine (as opposed to the more paced combat of the VF games). If the PlayStation version is missing a few polygons, or if the textures aren't quite arcade perfect, so what. As long as the coin-op's ultra-frenetic gameplay is intact (and there's no reason to think it won't be), Tekken 3 will easily be the PlayStation's greatest 3-D fighter.

HAPPY ENDINGS

The phrase "FMV sucks!" has been repeated so many times in game-mag reviews and editorials that it has become an industry cliché. And yes, 90 percent of the time, FMV is a useless nuisance that you're quick to skip with a slap of the Start button.

Unless you're playing a Namco game. With the possible exception of Oddworld's, FFVII's and RE2's cinemas, Namco's CG movies are the best in the biz. But you already knew that if you've seen the jaw-dropping endings of Tekken 2, Soul Blade's amazing intro or Klonoa's tear-jerker finale. Better still—these FMV masterpieces are always exclusive to the home versions of Namco's arcade fighters, just another extra that makes the PlayStation ports even better than the coin-ops.

Tekken 3 will be no different. As in Tekken 2, this sequel will pack CG endings for each character and a rendered intro for the game itself—and this time the FMV will even be slightly longer. Producer Hajime Nakatini explained that these mini-movies, most of which are created in-house at Namco, are certainly no small part of the development process. "A lot of work goes into these cinematic sequences," he said, "but the artists who work on this part of the game really enjoy

Namco's renders of Gon hint at what we'll see in Tekken 3. Could they be from his ending?

what they do. The amount of time that goes into each character's ending really varies from character to character. Some are very easy to implement, but others take much longer."

Namco's obvious CG expertise has led to abundant rumors of forthcoming feature-film projects. Chief among them: An actual Tekken movie set between Tekken 3 and 4. But don't reserve an aisle seat just yet. When asked about the rumor, Nakatani's response was anything but a confirmation. "Is it true?" he said. "I'd love to hear more about it."

Oh well. We'll just have to make do with small-screen Tekken flics.

SURE THINGS

With the release of Tekken 3 still a little ways away, Namco isn't ready to spill the beans on every PlayStation-exclusive feature. Nevertheless, Namco has confirmed many of the console version's nitty-gritty details. Here's what we know for sure...

A Quest Mode's out; Gon the dino's in. Expect secret extras, too.

- As before, each character will have a rendered ending—and this time the FMV will be even longer.
- Tekken 3 will pack the standard Namco extras, such as Practice, Time Attack, Survival and Team Battle Modes.
- It will not—unlike the home version of Soul Blade—include a Quest Mode, although Nakatani said, "We will be putting in some other extras that have never been seen before."
- The PlayStation version will feature the same 3-D-ish backgrounds as the arcade game.
- The roster will include at least one PlayStation-exclusive fighter, prehistoric Manga star Gon. As for other new characters, Nakatani would only say, "There are still some surprises you'll find when the game comes out."
- The game will neither require nor be packed with any RAM expansion or other PlayStation upgrade. Simply put, it will push your PlayStation to its absolute limits.

Screen shot answers: Shots A and D are from the PlayStation.

38
Reversals
24
Overhead grabs
36
Combination moves
You figure it out !
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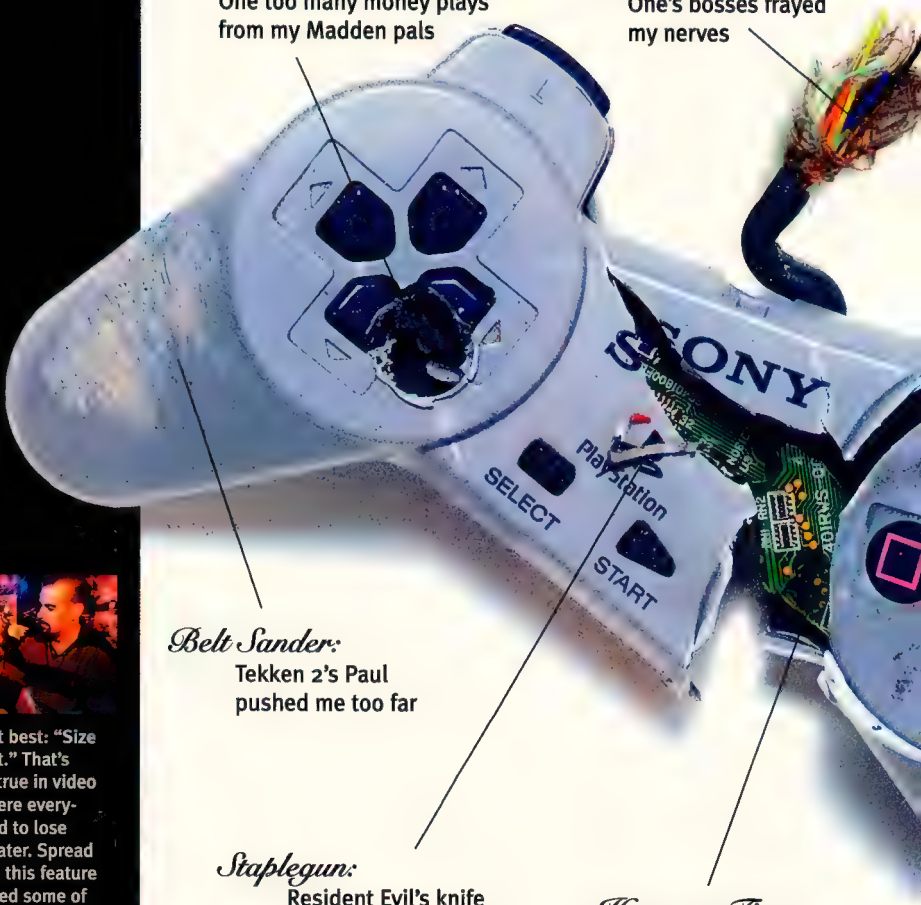


Bullet Hole:
One too many money plays from my Madden pals

Snapped Cord:
One's bosses frayed my nerves

Belt Sander:
Tekken 2's Paul pushed me too far

Staplegun:
Resident Evil's knife just didn't cut it

Hammer Time:
Used brawn instead of brains in Oddworld

Yoda said it best: "Size matters not." That's especially true in video games, where everyone's bound to lose sooner or later. Spread throughout this feature we've printed some of our readers' favorite sore-loser tactics, re-enacted by our own Oscar-nominated duo of mismatched models.

Calling all

Bic Lighter Damage:
Fire right back at ya, Thumper

Teeth Marks:
Tomb Raider II got me biting mad

poor losers

Written by Alex Gordon Photography by Michael Stassus and Dave Robinson

Video games are the great equalizer. No matter your size, age, IQ or tax bracket, you're gonna get taken down in a game sooner or later, by either a superior player two or the CPU. Trouble is, not all gamers prescribe to the philosophy that you should be a good loser, learn from your mistakes and prepare for the next foe. Such an ideal is fine if you're playing "gentlemen's sports" like hockey or roller derby, but in the world of video games we've found there's only one kind of loser—a sore loser.

We've spent the last few months observing the sore-loser species, and like Jane Goodall we're back from the bush to report on their strategies, tactics and behavior. After combing through hundreds of readers' letters and examining our own behavior around the office, our primary field work revealed two distinct classes of sore losers. The first group we like to call the Hulk-esque sore losers. This bad-tempered bunch simply resorts to acts of "physical" violence—sometimes even hand-to-hand combat—in response to losing. Perhaps you observed this type of behaviour (doesn't it sound that much more official if we use the British spelling?). Examples include throwing a controller, punching an opponent, or better yet throwing a controller at an opponent. These types of losers aim to actually hurt their game-playing buddy or their system.

The second class of losers we describe as Banner-esque (after the esteemed scientist Dr. Bruce Banner, the Hulk's alter ego). These losers are a conniving bunch who tailor their sore-losing tactics to the particular game they're playing. Their goal is to psychologically harm their opponent through mind games and other high-brow trickery.

Let's examine now the tactics and behaviours of these two distinct groups. Far and away the most common habit of the Hulk-esque sore loser is controller abuse, which is similar to other forms of substance abuse in that it always starts out small. For instance, you might drop your controller or mildly bang it on the counter. The problem is after a few mild bangs on the counter, you're suddenly not satisfied. You begin to slam the controller, then you wham the joypad. Next thing you know you're heaving the controller against the wall. And then you start doing the hard stuff—dropping your controller in a vat of boiling oil, microwaving it, injecting your controller with the Ebola virus (for a complete list of common joypad abuses, see sidebar).

Controllers aren't the only items that get beat up. Consoles, game cartridges, peripherals, file cabinets, family pets—they've all taken their fair share of abuse at the hands of the frustrated Oddworld player. Some say video game manufacturers purposely encourage this type of behavior. After all, every time you slam a controller to the ground in disgust they see dollar signs. If your budget's tight, you might want to surround yourself with alternative items to thrash—perhaps your little sister's Beanie Babies or Spice Girls action figures.

We've also observed several sore losers who physically attack their opponents. If you fall into this category, you might want to seek professional help. You see, while attacking your opponent on the screen is perfectly acceptable, attacking your opponent in real life is not. In fact, we checked with our legal department and it seems that all 50 states have laws against physically harming someone. Such offenses, according to legalese jargon, are known as assault or battery or first-degree murder, but the common denominator is there's no video-game exemption. Judges, while perfectly willing to accept insanity pleas, have been known to frown upon excuses like "Your honor, he was kicking my butt in Tekken 2."

Professional Help

...I turn off the power, then smash the CD!

—jocko@mediaone.net

That seconds-long rush of relief you get when you suckerpunch your joypad after a particularly frustrating game may be the greatest feeling in the world. But where are you five minutes later? With sore knuckles splintered by the scattered shrapnel of a $20 controller. So, to help those poor losers prone to bashing, tossing and even jack hammering their game gear to oblivion, we sought some expert advice.

"When you get frustrated, you're activating a program in the brain," said Dr. Matthew Leads, a clinical psychologist who teaches a course on emotion at Harvard University. "The emotion is forcing you to get more involved, push harder, and maybe pick up that joystick and smash it. So the first thing you gotta do is notice what's happening, then interrupt it."

Catching yourself before you can do any damage is the key, Leeds explained, and all it takes to head off the anger are some old-fashioned relaxation techniques. "You literally do want to count to 10 and slow yourself down," he said, "but the best thing is to step back and leave the game for a few minutes. It'll distract you and start to change your emotional state." Of course, if you're having a really tough time coming to grips with your frustration, maybe all you need is to put things in perspective. "Part of the reason for the emotion is to get your system ready for action," Leeds said, "but the truth is you're not really about to go into battle, and smashing your joystick will just mean you'll have a bill to pay later."

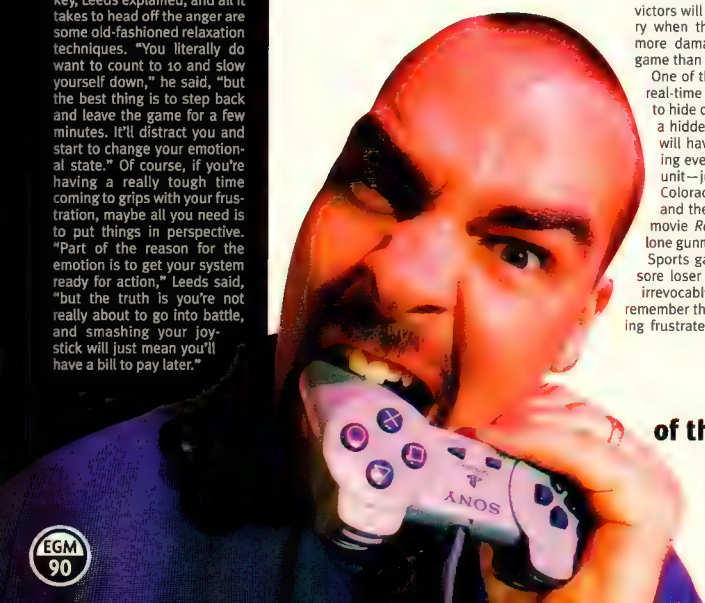
Not all Hulk-esque sore-losing takes on such brutish proportions. Some other tactics of this species include unplugging your opponent's controller, turning off the monitor, resetting the system and/or repeatedly pausing the game. And of course, when all else fails, a steady stream of profanities directed at the game, your opponent or the god of your choice is always an alternative.

The second class of losers, the Banner-esque crew, is less physically aggressive and resort to clever and unusually annoying tactics within the games themselves to manifest their self-disgust. It's usually the players who have no business being in the game with a more skilled opponent who have to resort to these nefarious tricks. We've played more than our fair share of games with these types of opponents and have witnessed firsthand their irritating behavior. Some of them are so evil that we hesitate to share 'em with you (there's a sore-loser trick for Circus Atari that actually summons the hounds of hell, but you'll have to search the Web for that one).

Here then are some tactics guaranteed to prove you're a suave sore loser. When you find yourself falling far behind in a racing game like Mario Kart, simply turn your vehicle around and plow down the track in the wrong direction, taking out all the oncoming speedsters and prolonging the heat indefinitely. If you are playing a multiplayer first-person shooter game, such as Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown or GoldenEye 007, start killing yourself to screw up the scores. If you're lucky, you can blow yourself and your opponents to messy bits at the same time by firing a heavy artillery item like a rocket launcher in a confined space. The victors will be frustrated with their hollow victory when they realize you were able to inflict more damage on your own character in one game than they ever could.

One of the more frustrating loser tactics in a real-time strategy game like C&C: Red Alert is to hide one tiny infantry unit in the trees or in a hidden corner of the map. Your opponent will have to waste countless hours searching every last nook and cranny for your last unit—just like the Russians scanning the Colorado countryside for Patrick Swayze and the rest of the pesky Wolverines in the movie *Red Dawn*—so he can take out your lone gunman and finally be declared the victor.

Sports games let you take the art of being a sore loser to a new level. If you find yourself irrevocably down in a soccer or hockey game, remember this: Just like on the playground, nothing frustrates the other guy more than playing



...so I bit a chunk out of the rubber Start button.

—Jordon Luster, Vandalia, Ill.

ALL HELL'S BREAKING LOOSE...
POLTERGEIST REPORT
YUYU - HAKUSHO
Armed with awesome, super-natural powers, five sentinels from the Spirit World must battle the demonic hordes of Lord Yakumo for possession of five, mystical sites... before our world becomes the new Netherworld.
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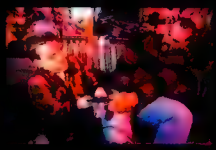


If my brother's winning in GoldenEye...I grab his controller and we get in a tug of war with it.

—David Simmons
Daytona Beach, Fla.

What do I do if I lose a game? Well, when it's against a buddy, it's pretty simple. The guy's right there so I can beat the smirk right off his face.

—janusffps@aol.com

While playing GoldenEye, I was in my recliner and I shot [my friend] Paul and he flipped my chair with me in it over backward.

—Ryan Pulley

When my 7-year-old cousin beat me at WCW Vs. NWO, I hit him in the gut.

—coolnessdy@aol.com

When losing, I have a peculiar habit of apologizing to my Sonic stuffed animal.

—Jeff B. Liu

keep-away. In basketball, for instance, intentionally foul every chance you get, and in baseball, nothing's more satisfying than alternating between intentionally walking and beaning the other player's batters.

There's one sports series, however, that has created its own microcosm of sore-losing scumbags. The Madden Football series is the Super Bowl of sore losers. In fact, the popular gridiron game inspired one of our office's proudest, most despicable sore losers, creative director Mike Stassus, to prepare an entire manual of sore-losing tips. Among the highlights:

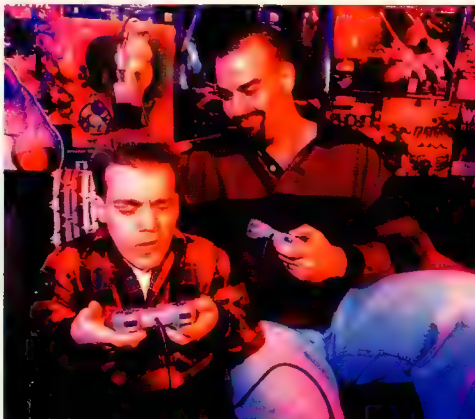
- No matter what mistakes you make, never admit them. Throwing an interception is always "part of the plan." Any penalties called against your team—such as pass interference and offsides—should be loudly pointed out as being cheap stuff created by the computer. On the other hand, mistakes the other player makes are ALWAYS due to your skill.
- The vaunted Michael Jackson Offense. This particular piece of psychological warfare consists of putting a man in motion and making him cut back and forth as you yell "whoo" in a high-pitched Michael Jackson-like voice. Trust us—it'll drive your opponent into a near-suicidal frenzy.
- After missing a big tackle or giving up a lot of yards, loudly say any of the following: "My controller is broken. I'm not kidding—the X button's busted or somethin'." (You can even insist on trading controllers with your opponent if you like for extra style points.) Or, "What color is my team?" And lastly, "I forgot. Am I really on offense (defense)?"

In addition, brag endlessly about how you don't like to show your "real" offense until the second half. Also threaten to run your "Fake return Statue of Liberty play" on every kickoff—it doesn't matter if you are kicking or receiving.

- Jump offsides. It keeps stopping the clock and prevents frustrated opponents from calling plays.
- If the game is close and your opponent is running a crucial passing play, pause the game. When your opponent freaks out, tell him you were trying to call a time out or that your broken controller must be acting up again.
- Declare that the game is only being played so you can test some experimental new moves. Then tell your opponent you'd like to start the game

I unplug my opponent's controller during gameplay.

—Erik Iverson, Plover, Wis.



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Genki

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TEEN AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

ocean

INFOGRAMES

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Safeguards Schmafeguards

If you bother reading the "Important Safeguards" pamphlet packed with your PlayStation, you'll see a list of no-brainer no-nos warning against everything from servicing the console yourself to playing with your PlayStation in the bathtub. Well, we see these not as precautions but as perfect poor-loser suggestions for getting back at your system. In fact, we've gone so far as to add a few more creative ways to abuse that perennial poor-loser scapegoat, the controller (we've even added illustrations that are similar to—but certainly not from—Sony's safeguard literature).

By all means, try this at home...

- Twist your controller, like you're wringing a towel.

- Dunk it in a variety of boiling liquids.

- Feed the joypad into a chipper shredder.

- Launch it into the sun.

- Inject it with numerous infectious diseases.

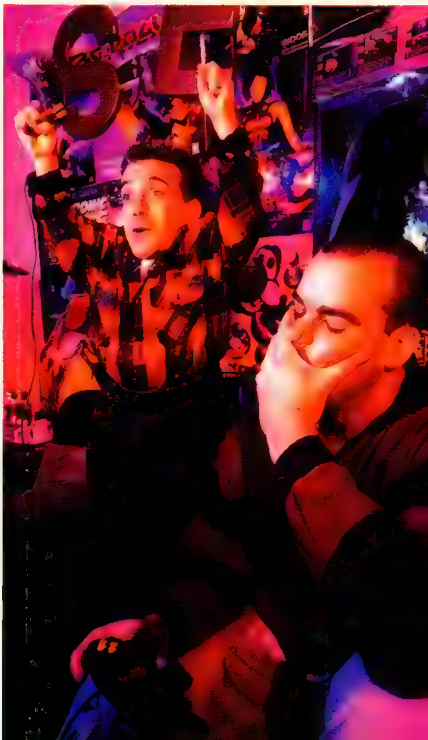
...so I threw the Game Boy hard on the ground, causing the batteries to fly out.
—wolfpup48@aol.com

over, since the experiment isn't going very well. If he or she refuses, just punt on first down or run into your end zone and wait to get tackled over and over. While you do this, keep letting your opponent know he or she "really" isn't beating you because you're not trying.

• If all else fails accuse, blame, accuse! Accuse your opponent of cheating as much as you can! You need to complain that he or she must know a secret fumble, interception or field goal code that lets him or her score at will. Also complain about his or her use of "money plays" he or she got off the Internet from some Madden geek. Last but not least, tell your opponent over and over you have better things to do with your time than to play Madden all day to learn how to win. Then go on and on about your high-paying job, hot-looking girlfriend or real athletic abilities that don't translate to video games. (Note, this last tip could be a problem if you're over 25 and still living with your mother).

We hope the lessons learned in this article will help you embrace losing as a necessary and ultimately enriching part of the video game playing experience. Losing can be just as fun as winning if done with the right élan. With a little bit of practice, creativity and perseverance, you too may someday rank up there with the Buffalo Bills, Napoleon and Tony Danza as one of the great losers of all time.

I never lose!!
—rudy3oook@aol.com



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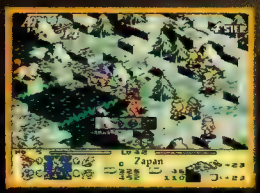

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ATLUS

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Review Crew

Our Philosophy

With this ish, we celebrate the return of...Game Boy reviews! All hail the immortal portable! Oh yeah—our routine: Each reviewer gives a game an overall score, which is displayed behind the review and based on how the game compares to other titles for the same system. In addition, the reviewers rate each game's graphics, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of these scores are listed at the bottom.

Editors' Choice

Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.

Games that average at least an 8.0 receive Silver Awards.

Rating Scale

10-Perfection
An absolutely flawless experience. It doesn't get any better.

9-Virtually Flawless
Drop what you're doing and buy this nearly perfect game.

8-Semradical
Delivers everything you'd want in a game, despite minor flaws.

7-Worthy
A solid title that you won't regret buying.

6-Good, Not Great
Sure, it has its problems, but it's still fun to play.

5-Average
Not great, not crap. A ho-hum title that isn't for everybody.

4-Rent First
We have problems here. Definitely try before you buy.

3-Time Waster
Playing it for more than 10 minutes gives you a migraine.

2-Don't Even Rent
The only point in playing this garbage is to make fun of it.

1-Flush It
Run for your life if you see it, or use it as a coaster.

Guest Reviewer

Dean Hager
Managing Editor

Dean is a five-year veteran of Sendai and Ziff-Davis publications and has seen a lot of young whipper snappers come and go. An avid sports and racing game enthusiast, he last served on Team EGM before being appointed Managing Editor of the lovely mag you're now reading. If there was only one game he could ever play again it would have to be NCAA GameBreaker '98. Destroying Michigan again and again with his beloved Huskers would never cease to give him pleasure. On his list of New Year's resolutions Dean promises to play an RPG in '98 and give up smoking corn silk. Good luck!

Current Favorites
Mascar 98
NCAA GameBreaker '98
Jeremy McGrath Supercross '98
Skullmonkeys
Favorite Genres: Sports/Racing

Shawn Smith

Since the main feature story this month deals with the fine art of being a sore loser, the Crew guys decided to share the childish, sometimes illegal things they do when they're being beaten by the CPU or another player. Consequently, since Shawn's introduced this, he doesn't have any room to share his experiences with you. Oh well—too bad for him!

Current Favorites
Winter Heat
Resident Evil 2
X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Camper's Knife
Favorite Genres:
Action/Adventure

Dan Hsu

Current Favorites
X-Men vs. SF (Japanese)
Winter Heat
Gex: Enter the Gecko
Not James Bond 007 (GB)
Favorite Genres:
Strategy/Puzzle

Poor-loser Shoe had to remove himself from the office Winter Heat competition. No matter how hard he tried, he could not beat the other guys' records. He says he needs a controller with turbo buttons. The staff is currently guarding the Saturn that contains all the world records to make sure Shoe doesn't mess with the system memory.

Crispin Boyer

When Cris is losin', everybody knows about it. It's not just the swearing—Cris gets loudly violent. He directs most of his ire at his file cabinet, which now looks like a battered chunk of fallen Skylab. He even smashed his Tekken 2 CD after a losing streak. In his defense, Cris says every game and file cabinet he ever smashed was asking for it.

Current Favorites
Winter Heat
Gex: Enter the Gecko
Einhänder
Tactics Ogre
Favorite Genres:
RPGs/Action

Kraig Kujawa

Current Favorites
NFL Blitz (Arcade)
Mystical Ninja
Resident Evil 2
NBA ShootOut '98
Favorite Genres:
Sports/Strategy

Kraig insists he's never been a sore loser, but when we used an Independent Counsel to dig up some dirt, we found that he and his little brother Kerry would get into shouting matches and brawls over Kraig's losses. Now, Kraig seems to be a kinder, gentler Madden player, but we haven't beaten him anytime recently to put him to the test.

John Ricciardi

John's not much of a sore loser when it comes to multi-player games (though he's threatened Shoe more than once after losing to him in XMvSF), but when he starts doing bad in 1P games, it's time to clear the area. The copy editors (who reside in the next office) had to take all valuables down off of their walls due to John's projectile controller attacks.

Current Favorites
Final Fantasy Tactics
Tactics Ogre
Winter Heat
X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Favorite Genres:
RPGs/Adventure

Kelly Rickards

Current Favorites
X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Street Fighter Collection
GoldenEye 007
Resident Evil 2
Favorite Genres:
Fighting/Racing

Back in the day, Kelly was a notorious sore loser. At his local arcade, he earned the name "Beefcake" when he would regularly overturn coin-op machines to recover lost tokens. Once he got stung by the SF2 bug, his life changed forever. The self-proclaimed originator of "Hyper-Honorable Ryu Style," he's now a born-again disciple in the art of Ryu.

Sushi-X

This one's easy. Sushi never loses. OK, there was that one time last month when he lost to Kelly in Street Fighter Alpha 2, but Kelly's been, shall we say, taken care of. Oh, and let's not forget when Shoe beat him in Tetris Attack. Hope your leg's feeling better, Shoe. Now he mostly plays games in the arcade, where he says the pickins are easier.

Current Favorites
Street Fighter Collection
Street Fighter EX Plus α
Mystical Ninja
Resident Evil 2
Favorite Genres:
Fighting/RPGs

MYSTICAL NINJA

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Large, Immersive World

Worst Feature: Camera Problems

www.konami.com

Publisher: Konami

Developer: Konami

Featured In: *EGM* #104

I really enjoyed the first Mystical Ninja—it was one of the first really good SNES games. Years later, a sequel has finally made it to the U.S. (there have been several Japanese sequels). But after all this time, I was skeptical as to how faithful a 3-D sequel could really be. Thankfully, **Konami has done a wonderful job of bringing the Mystical Ninja series to a polygonal environment.** The adventure-minded gameplay is a cross between Mario 64 and what I envision Zelda 64 to be. There's lots of exploration tempered with platform elements and plenty of combat. The game is well-paced because it offers some very humorous moments and unexpected action sequences that keep the adventure fresh. One of these diversions involves running over entire neighborhoods in a large, roller-skating robot in an effort to get to the end Boss of the area. Once you're there, the game shifts to first-person mechanical combat. You just can't beat the wide variation of gameplay this game provides. The only real problem with Mystical Ninja is that the camera is hard to manipulate and occasionally makes things hard to see. This becomes a problem when leaping around pit-filled castles. Regardless, Mystical Ninja is a must-have for adventure fans, and should provide some relief for those waiting for Zelda 64.

Kraig

The newest installment in the long-running series is plenty weird (lots of oddball characters, inside jokes—even music videos and a laugh track). It's also **one of the longest games you'll find on the N64.** The adventure starts slow, and I got lost a few times trying to find the right person to talk to. But it's filled with enough mini-games, cool Bosses and challenging 3-D platform action to keep you hooked until the end.

Crispin

Goemon has its shortcomings, but all in all it's a very cool game. **There's quite a bit of diversity in the gameplay**, and the mini-games and Boss battles are a ton of fun. The bizarre story and wacky Japanese humor is certainly a nice change of pace (the audience laughter just floored me the first time I heard it). The towns are a little too big IMO (I got lost a lot!), but I don't have any other major complaints. Really nice music, too.

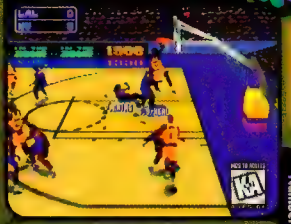
John

It's been a while since I've played a game this weird. Mystical Ninja's gameplay is real straightforward, but the Japanglish dialogue between characters and strange story line had me scratching my head. Aside from this, the graphics and variety of tasks and mini-games are smashing. The worst points are the awkward camera angles and the inability to easily control them. It's still worth checking out, if only because it's so unique.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
7	7	7	5

NBA IN THE ZONE '98



Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: There's Always Next Year

Worst Feature: Weak Graphics

www.konami.com

Publisher: Konami

Developer: Konami

Featured In: *EGM* #102

In The Zone '98 may be the first (and therefore only) "realistic" basketball game on the N64, but that doesn't change the sorry truth—this game is sorely disappointing. Before I even get into the gameplay problems, what's the deal with the ugly graphics? The players animate nicely, but the courts look horrendous (washed out is an understatement) and the crowd looks equally terrible (is there a fog settling in?). The PlayStation version (which was developed by a different team at Konami) looks a million times better than this, and there's just no excuse for that. Anyway, gameplay. ITZ '98 is completely offense-oriented. The Drive button in combination with the Dash button makes for an easy two points almost every time. Little guys will run through big guys—centers will drive from half court—whatever you want. It just adds up to a boring game with **absolutely no defense whatsoever**. I've got other minor problems too, like the lack of icon passing (I'm a big supporter of icon passing, as you know), the weak free-throw system and the various useless camera angles. Changing players is an exercise in frustration, too. As far as stats and options go, ITZ is loaded, but nowadays that's expected. From a company like Konami on a system as strong as the N64, I expect more.

John

I'm sorry to report that the first N64 basketball game is a bad one. ITZ '98 suffers from so many flaws, I just don't have enough space to describe them all. Let's just say that too many aspects of the shooting, stealing, dunking, passing, free-throw shooting and (lack of) defense are unrealistic and/or frustrating. Then there's the blurry and sluggish 3-D graphics that are equally as bad, making this **the worst ITZ game in the series.**

Kraig

I may be a casual sports gamer, but **I sure know a mediocre basketball game when I see one.** After the first game, the problems become immediately apparent: Switching players on defense is a pain, the AI is non-existent and anyone (including short guys) can drive to the hoop with ease. The game looks pretty good but falters in the playability department. I'd wait around for a better N64 basketball game to come out.

Dan

I was really disappointed with this N64 game, because I thought Konami would do much better. **The horrendously blurry graphics gave me a headache that shook my cranium worse than a San Francisco earthquake.** If you can get past the graphics, the gameplay isn't too bad—especially if you don't mind being able to score a whole lot and whenever you want. If an N64 is the only console you own, this one is worth renting at best.

Kelly

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
4	5	3	4

NHL BREAKAWAY '98

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Very Nice Graphics

Worst Feature: Puck Physics Are A Little Weird

www.acclaimnation.com

Publisher: Acclaim

Developer: Acclaim Studios

Featured In: *EGM* #104

NHL Breakaway '98 for the N64 may not be the perfect hockey game, but it's light-years ahead of its PlayStation counterpart in nearly every aspect. Breakaway is heavy on the simulation side of hockey. You've got players that act like their real-life counterparts. You've got a complex coaching system that lets you earn and use points toward improving various aspects of your team. You've got numerous systems like "Momentum-Based Checking" and "Total Team Management." Now, I am a huge hockey fan and I respect all this emphasis on detail and all—but frankly, it's not my main concern. What concerns me more are the gameplay issues. Once you've got that down, then go after the finer details. Fortunately Breakaway is almost there (the PS version wasn't even close). The AI is very nice—the CPU-controlled players know what to do and when to do it. The graphics and sounds are excellent too (nice animation!), though the crowd is way too tame for a hockey game. On the downside, the puck is a little floaty, which can get annoying, and the player control is a bit sluggish. More action in front of and around the net would've been nice. Still, **Breakaway IS (currently) the best N64 hockey game**, and aside from a few minor flaws, it's got what it takes to be a serious contender. Hockey fans check it out.

John

This is the best N64 hockey game I've played yet. Granted there are only three others (Midway's Gretzky triplets), but **Breakaway offers the most realistic and entertaining play**. On the downside, the "medium" res graphics don't quite live up to the QB Club standard but certainly aren't bad. Also, the goalie AI is a little weak (some of my games got out of hand). Still, Breakaway is solid enough to take the number-one spot.

Dean

What a difference a system has made for the Nintendo 64 version of NHL Breakaway '98. Whatever this title lacks in realism and AI, it easily makes up for in playability. The Season Mode of the game is cool, because **in a way it's a sports RPG.** You can take points earned from wins and then improve your team by hiring (and firing) new coaches and making stadium improvements. Nice to see a unique and fun hockey game come along.

Sushi

This game looks good. It has all the players and teams. It even has FOX's signature puck shadow and tracking streak. So, what's the problem? **The game, like many others before it, just doesn't feel enough like hockey.** The rendered players look great, but they have a hollow feel to them when you're knocking them down. While it may not be the champion of hockey games, it is a strong addition to the sparse N64 sports lineup.

Kelly

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
8	7	7	8

QUAKE 64

Publisher: Midway

Developer: Midway

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Great Graphics

Worst Feature: No Four-Player Support

www.midway.com

Once again, the N64 gets a high-quality first-person shooter. Quake 64 is the best-looking one yet (yes, in my opinion, even better looking than the almighty GoldenEye 007). The one-player game has great lighting effects and a smooth frame-rate. The enemies are all equally unique and frightening. It's awesome to open a door and see a demon run full speed toward you. In fact, the only complaint I have on the single-player game is the lack of variety. Each stage's textures look like the next, making them look pretty indistinguishable. **Almost every other Doom-type game on the N64 has more interesting level designs** (especially 007 and Duke). I'm really happy Midway decided to put in a Multiplayer Mode (which was conspicuously missing from their Doom 64). It's rather fun, but it's not without its own problems. First, the frame-rate takes a big hit with two players. Second, the weapons are unbalanced, making every deathmatch a race to get the power weapons (like rockets). Third, it only supports two players! Midway didn't want to delay the game to put in four-player support, but I would've gladly waited for it. Two-player deathmatch is tame compared to the four-player games. On the upside, Quake 64's deathmatch-specific levels are very well designed. This is a solid buy.

Sushi

Dude, I am all over this version of Quake. On top of the sweet graphics and smooth one-player frame-rate, the control made it easy to take out every hellspawn that came my way. The multicolored lighting effects and ambient soundtrack complete the package. **On the multi-player side of things, Quake 64 slips a little.** I mean, where's the Four-player Mode? I'm afraid that two-player just doesn't cut it for this hardcore Quake worshipper.

Kelly

This is the prettiest version of Quake yet (prettier even than the PC GL version, thanks to some texture-lighting ideas "borrowed" from Quake 2). But here's the problem: As in Midway's Doom games, you can only save between levels. Quake 64's ramped up difficulty means you'll be replaying later levels many times until you can get past 'em. Deathmatch Mode's disappointing, too; DM levels are too big for two players.

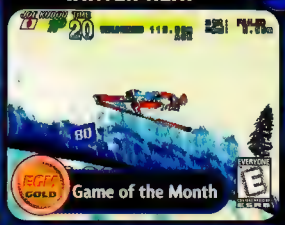
Crispin

This is a great translation of Quake's Single-player Mode (especially graphically), but everyone knows that multiplayer combat is what made Quake popular. Midway included a Deathmatch Mode, but it's limited to two players. Compounding this problem is that there aren't enough Deathmatch levels and what is there is too big for two combatants. If you don't mind its limited multiplayer capabilities, Quake 64 is a good game.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	5	5

WINTER HEAT



Publisher: Sega of America

Developer: Sega Enterprises, Ltd.

Featured In: *EGM* #104

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Great Four-Player Fun

Worst Feature: It's Murder On The Hands

www.sega.com

I now believe that guardian angels exist. Why, you ask? Simply put, someone from above must have heard my prayers asking that a sequel to DecAthlete—my favorite Olympic game of all time—be made. OK, maybe it wasn't so much God's intervention as it was some smart person's decision at Sega. Whatever the case may be, what a great move. Winter Heat takes all of the good things of DecAthlete and adds a few aesthetic features that add up to produce one kick-ass Winter Olympic title. The camera angles, sound and control are all virtually flawless. The game's graphics aren't quite as hi-res as other Saturn classics (Virtua Fighter 2, DecAthlete, etc.), but the dramatic camera panning easily makes up for it. Sound-wise the title makes you feel like you're really flying down the slopes or trying your damnedest not to flip over in your bobsled. Then there's the control. Even though some of the events seem tricky, this doesn't stop that particular area from being a barrel of fun, and consequently a nice showplace for skill. Of course, the game has events that are nothing more than crazy tap-tap-tapping, too. **As fun as the one-player game is, the Four-player Mode is where WH really shines.** Only with GoldenEye and Bomberman have I had this much multiplayer fun.

Shawn

Winter Heat has it all: brilliant hi-res graphics, innovative control schemes for the 11 events and the same polish and personality that made DecAthlete so cool. The Four-player Mode makes it another must-have multiplayer game. Unlike other recent Winter Olympics titles, Winter Heat doesn't emphasize realism or technical details. **It's the pure arcade fun** that'll keep you breakin' records long after the snow has melted in Nagano.

Crispin

Winter Heat is far and away the best of this year's Winter Olympics-style games. Each event requires different techniques with the control pad, and they're all a lot of fun. Button-tapping prowess is a must (Track & Field fans rejoice), but there's more than just that—**timing is key**, especially in events like the Aerials (my fav) or Ski Jumping. WH looks and feels very nice, and with four-player support, it makes for a great party game.

John

Quick quiz: 1.) Do you like playing multiplayer games? 2.) **Are you extremely competitive?** 3.) Do you like button-mashing Track & Field type action? If the answers are yes, then no doubt about it, Winter Heat is for you. It's a great party game for people who love shooting for high scores and breaking records. A couple of warnings: eventually, the game will get old as records become harder to beat, and it's not that much fun in one-player.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	9

GEX: ENTER THE GECKO

Publisher: Crystal Dynamics

Developer: Crystal Dynamics

Featured In: *EGM* #99

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Creative Level Design

Worst Feature: Occasional Slowdown

www.crystald.com

The first half-dozen times Crystal Dynamics brought this game out to show us, I thought, "Hmm...it's just a so-so Mario 64 hopeful. No big deal." My mind quickly changed when I actually played the game. **Enter the Gecko is a lot of fun!** Ninety percent of that is due to the excellent level design. Each of the themed worlds carries a distinct and funny personality of its own, making you want to keep playing to see what the next stage has to offer. The creativity and thought put into this vast game is mighty impressive. Other good points: The control is right on par, the graphics are simple and clean, and the highly touted camera angles work...for the most part (I still haven't found a 3-D game whose camera worked perfectly). Gex's trademark humor also helps this game stand out. The numerous new wise-cracks will draw a chuckle or two (and they never seem to get on your nerves, despite the occasional repeat). I only wish Gex could scale any wall, instead of just the designated surfaces. I understand how that could be a problem game design-wise, but how cool would a 3-D gecko game be if you could climb anywhere you wanted? Be that as it may, Enter the Gecko gives you lots to do, lots to explore and lots to look at. Give it a shot. I think it's the best 3-D mascot/platform game on the PlayStation so far.

Dan

Gex's gorgeous graphics really exemplify just how far the PS has come since its release. Loads of beautiful textures, seamless animation, great lighting effects—the game is just a joy to look at. But that's just the outside. On the inside lies a great 3-D platformer with tons of replay value and truly hilarious gameplay. **This game has loads of personality.** My one gripe is that the camera can get annoying at times, but it's not unbearable.

John

A fan of the first Gex, I was hoping the sequel would be 2-D. But after playing this polygonal rendition, I'm not disappointed at all since **this is about as good as PS 3-D platformers get.** There's a lot to do in Gex, partly due to the huge, diverse (and great-looking) levels. The one fault with the mission-based gameplay is that it lends to some unnecessary backtracking through levels. Still, this is a great PS platformer.

Kraig

Gex is as good as Mario 64 clones get on the PlayStation. It packs more than enough levels, all of which are unique. I like the mission structure of each level, since it keeps you exploring. Still, the game's not perfect. Despite the effort Crystal Dynamics put into the camera system, awkward camera angles are abundant, often making it hard to judge your jumps. You can usually adjust the camera to a workable angle, though

Crispin

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	6

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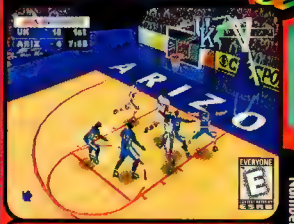
MARCH MADNESS 98



Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: EA Sports

Featured In: *EGM* #102

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Loaded With Features

Worst Feature: Computer Intelligence

Finally, EA has brought out a college hoops game for the PS. Unfortunately, it uses a modified version of the Live 97 game engine. This means that in addition to slightly outdated 3-D graphics, it's way too easy to beat the computer (unless you challenge a good team with a really bad one). March Madness 98's biggest problem is that you can bully or finesse your way to the bucket with ease. One of my favorite easy-to-do cheap plays is passing to the other side of the court for a dunk before the computer players get back on defense. Playing against a good human opponent is much harder, at least. Still, there is a lot to like about this game. For one, atmosphere is a big part of March Madness, and unlike any other basketball title, it could affect the outcome of the game. The innovative (and optional) "Momentum Meter" is a very cool feature that pumps up or deflates your player's abilities according to how he is playing and how the crowd reacts. The less innovative, but appreciated college fight songs, and detailed basketball courts also contribute greatly to the collegiate flavor of the game—and hey, you can even play with women's teams. I like this game, but **EA should make their basketball games more challenging** so that you don't need a second player to make them fun.

Kraig

Another college addition gets a hand-me-down game engine. In fairness, the Live 97 engine is good enough to power this one but there are some flaws. Driving the lane like a steamroller, penalty-free is one. Another is the rampant breakaways after the throw-in. I forgive it though for the huge amount of teams available including the 11 women's teams. **It's not as flashy as the pro editions** but it shouldn't be—it's college ball!

Dean

In the month of March, I'm all over college basketball, baby. This title is just what the doctor ordered, especially since it's the only college game around. The graphics in the game are pretty good, but could be better—I just wish they would stop using refurbished game engines from a year ago on their college stuff. Regardless, all of the **features, options and solid play override most of its flaws**, making MM 98 a worthy buy.

Kelly

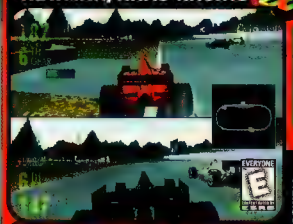
March Madness is a fairly solid basketball game. While it comes up short in the audio department (the crowd and sound effects are lackluster), it looks great. But Madness 98 suffers from the biggest problem plaguing most hoops games today: It's way too easy to get into the paint for an uncontested lay-up or dunk. **Why do basketball games have so much trouble with defensive AI?** Looking past that, MM 98 is a decent game.

Dan

www.easports.com

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
7	6	6	8

NEWMAN/HAAS RACING



Publisher: Psygnosis

Developer: Studio 33

Featured In: *EGM* #102

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Lots Of Depth

Worst Feature: More Of The Same

Right after booting this game up, I thought I was seeing F-1 Championship Edition all over again. Luckily, I wasn't out of my mind—the feeling was justified when I found that this game uses F-1's revamped game engine with the addition of CART vehicles. This isn't a bad thing since Newman/Haas' 3-D graphics serve this racer quite well. **The biggest strength of this game is its versatility.** By changing a few key options the game can be transformed from an unrealistic and care-free racer to a brutal simulation where one slip of the wheel can send your car into a race-ending spinout. Although the game has a wide array of options and vehicle modifications, the effect is not overwhelming as is the case with many of those daunting, ultra-realistic racers. There are plenty of different racing teams, lots of different tracks, and I bet some hidden tracks (F-1 had some awesome ones) will also be unveiled. The biggest beef I have with Newman/Haas racing is its difficulty. Even on its easiest settings, the game is very hard, especially on the less-forgiving tracks (such as those with hairpin turns). The sound is also somewhat annoying, partly because of the announcers' dialogue that dribbles on very repetitiously. Overall, I like Newman/Haas, I just wish it was more distinguishable from Psygnosis' other F-1 racers.

Sushi

Newman/Haas is a good racing game, but it just doesn't do much for me. See, I'm an average gamer and if you're like me, you may agree. **I don't necessarily want all of the realism that this one offers**, even though the game does realism incredibly well. The control, graphics and array of options are impressive, but I had more fun running into walls and exploring areas away from the track. In other words, it's for F-1 fans only.

Shawn

Newman/Haas is a decent "arcadish" racing experience. I wouldn't put it on the same level as NASCAR 98 or F1: CE, but it does offer some good racing. Aesthetically it's solid. Nice-looking 3-D graphics, good frame-rate and minimal pop-up go well with its Andretti Racing-inspired gameplay. My one complaint—**computer cars in single-player mode are very tough to beat** on any skill level, yet in two-player they're dogs.

Dean

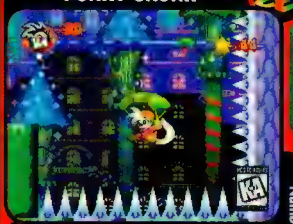
If you're a CART fan, and love racing games, this is a must-buy. If not, N/HR is simply a very respectable, realistic racing game. **N/HR has a rock-solid feel to it**, and the programmers did a great job of making the game easy to jump into with the default settings. The drawbacks are minor, including: only two views in Multiplayer Mode, a pair of annoying announcers and overly difficult gameplay in the One-player Simulation Mode.

Kelly

www.psygnosis.com

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
7	6	5	7

PUNKY SKUNK



Publisher: Jaleco

Developer: Visit

Featured In: *EGM* #102

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Kids'll Love It

Worst Feature: Adults Probably Won't

Punky Skunk may seem a few years late for the Sonic clone wars, but it really doesn't play like Aero the Acrobat, Bubsy or any of those other hedgehog copycats. Punky Skunk is an easy, slow-paced side-scroller that, when at its best, is reminiscent of Mickey Mouse: Castle of Illusion. But 90 percent of the time it comes across as no-frills platform rehash. Let's forget that the graphics—aside from being extra colorful—look straight out of a Super NES game (and don't even get me started on the mega-happy marching band music). The big problem here is that the gameplay is too basic. Although you get more than 30 stages, they're all pretty short and modeled after a few simple styles. Some have you riding air currents with a parachute, some have you roller skating, snowboarding, bouncing on a pogo stick or clawing through dirt Dig-Dug style. It may sound novel, but **since most of the levels are ultra-easy, the game quickly becomes monotonous.** Even more strange: Some stages are super hard (fortunately, you can save before each level to make passing these trouble spots less frustrating). Now I know this game is geared toward a younger crowd. Trouble is, I'm in my late 20s. And while I certainly have nothing against old-school gameplay, Punky Skunk is a little too preschool for my tastes.

Kelly

Punky Skunk is definitely aimed at kids; it probably won't keep older players that interested. Shooting stink gas, bouncing on pogos, roller skating and parachuting is fine but **I've seen it all before in years past**. That said, I have to admit that while the levels aren't too original or complex they do provide just the right amount of variety to keep you interested. It's safe to say that for a kid it should be pretty darn enjoyable

Sushi

Punky Skunk is a surprisingly decent 2-D platformer that's very obviously aimed at the 8 and under crowd. The average "older" gamer will romp through it in a day or two without much trouble, but I honestly think **the younger crowd will really enjoy the game's simplicity** and bright, vivid graphics. The power-ups are neat, but many of them aren't all that useful, and the mini-games are fun, but very easy. Good for children.

John

Punky Skunk *is* a PlayStation game, isn't it? For a while there I thought I was playing a 16-Bit side-scroller. True, there's nothing wrong with that, but at the same time using at least some of the PlayStation's technology can't be a bad thing, can it? The game is fun—leaning heavily toward the easy side of things—but that's just not enough to make this one stand out from other, more interesting side-scrollers already on store shelves.

Shawn

www.jaleco.com

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
5	5	4	5

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Castlevania	NOW	$12
Crash Bandicoot 2	NOW	$12
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Final Fantasy Tactics	NOW	$12
Final Fantasy VII	NOW	$14
Legacy of Kain	NOW	$13
Legend of Zelda 64	04/98	$13
Myst 2 Riven	NOW	$16
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Title	Release	Price
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GT Interactive
Release Date: NOW PSX $44

'BREATH OF FIRE III' Immense environments allow viewpoint rotation to reveal hidden pathways, items, secrets and powerups Find the secret of the Dragon shrines or become an apprentice to learn magic and special abilities
Capcom (Roleplaying)
Release Date: NOW PSX $44

'TRAVELLER STARSHIPS' This book describes the starships most commonly found in the new Third Imperium, as well as their use All noteworthy starships travelling the Imperial space are presented, along with detailed deck plans
Imperium Games (PP- Book)
Release Date: NOW PP $13

'POWER WHEEL' was designed to bring realism and playability to the video game player Provides smooth four direction shifting Brake and gas pedals provide a realistic feel and are ergonom cally designed to be used either sitting or standing Steering column can be adjusted for correct height
Game Source (Hardware)
Release Date: NOW PSX/SAT $52

'DEATHTRAP DUNGEON' This ultimate dungeon thriller is based on the fantasy gamebook series and offers 10 tortuous levels of combat Armed w th swords missiles, muskets magic spells and more, you can fight solo or multi-player combat in an eerie dungeon atmosphere
Eidos (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 3/98 PSX $44

'MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH' Three Japanese schoolgirls must save a Princess to restore peace to the land Breathtaking animation with over 90 minutes of audio When you talk to characters in the game, they reply!
Working Designs (Roleplaying)
Release Date: NOW SAT $52

'GEX: ENTER THE GECKO' All-new 360-degree free roaming 3D gameplay Whip cracking tail attacks, suction cup paws, flying karate kicks, and tongue lashing help GEX prevent Rez from taking over the country's TV broadcasts Over 125 moves, 3,400 frames of fluid character animation and "turn and talk" lip-synching
Midway
Release Date: NOW PSX $44

'YOSHI'S STORY' The characters in this 64-bit sequel to Yoshi s Island move with an uncanny degree of fluidity, particularly Yoshi, and the backgrounds are stunning This totally new approach to platform gaming features 24 levels
Nintendo
Release Date: 3/98 N64 $62

'NECROMUNDA' Rival gangs fight conflicts in the nightmare underclty The opposing gangs are represented by models you assemble and paint Arm and equip your gang efficiently, exploit the ruins and other terrain to your advantage, and outfight your opponent
Games Workshop (Board Game)
Release Date: NOW BG $59

'MAGIC THE GATHERING 5TH EDITION' This deck contains 60 tradable game cards, randomly assorted, plus a rule book Each player must have a deck This deck may be enhanced with more cards sold in booster packs
Wizards of the Coast (Card Game)
Release Date: NOW CG $7

'ALUNDRA' Grab a weapon and become the dreamwalker Alundra, as he struggles to purge the evil id of an ancient world before it falls to ash Explore dungeons, find weapons, solve puzzles, and kick monster butt as you weave between tense reality and nightmarish dreams
Working Designs
Release Date: NOW PSX $44

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ESMM98

TACTICS OGRE

Publisher: Atlus

Developer: Atlus/Quest/ArtDink

Featured In: *EGM* #104

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Looooonnnngggg

Worst Feature: Looooonnnngggg

This cult classic Super Famicom remake is being released at a rough time, considering the high-profile Final Fantasy Tactics just came out a month or two prior. Nevertheless, Tactics Ogre is still strong enough to stand on its own, even in the face of the graphically superior FFT. This epic game is huge. So huge in fact, **I would only recommend this game to those who sincerely enjoy this sub-genre of strategy games.** If you don't, you might find the game to be long and drawn-out. After all, Tactics Ogre involves a lot of repetitive battles and micromanaging of your troops. But if you're the patient type who can handle slow-paced turn-based games, then give Tactics Ogre a run. It has a great story line (one that's definitely easier to follow than FFT's) and a very intuitive interface (although I wish it had a few of FFT's shortcut features). The graphics are definitely 16-Bit, but it doesn't affect the game in any way. The sound, however, is rich and beautiful. The only minor technical complaint I have is the CD loading of tiny sound clips. Sometimes, the game will pause just to load in a simple sound effect. Regardless, Tactics Ogre is a high-quality title. If you missed this game the first time around (in Japan only), here's your chance to see what the buzz is about. Just don't expect it to blow you away if you're an FFT fan. **Dan**

In a nutshell, TO is a fantastic S/RPG, and in some ways even better than FFT. But it's got some drawbacks. Larger battlefields (and unit counts) are a major plus, but the lack of 3-D hurts. **FFT's engine with these big fields would've rocked.** The music is great, as is the story (with multiple endings, too), but the game moves rather slowly and the interface seems dated next to FFT's. Still, this is a must for fans of the Strategy/RPG genre. **John**

Here's the big question: Which is better, Tactics Ogre or FF Tactics? TO has a better story (it's much easier to follow than FFT's cast-of thousands yarn). And it definitely has longer battles. Since you can assemble bigger parties and fight on larger battlefields, some battles drag on for hours. Yet **I thought the battles got a little too long**—and tedious—after a while. I prefer the better-developed job system in FFT, too. **Crispin**

Tactics Ogre is one of those games that just plain takes a lot of time to play—there's no way around it. **Since it's such a good game though, this time is well spent.** Although TO may come off as being average at first (and it is to a certain extent), it still provides plenty of solid gameplay. The battles can be a little tedious, but the easy control and excellent music make the time pass quickly. Overall, it's a solid title to check out. **Shawn**

www.atlus.com

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	LIFE
6	8	6	5

JAMES BOND 007

Publisher: Nintendo

Developer: Saffire

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Inventory System

Worst Feature: Doesn't Feel Like A Bond Game

You've gotta be pullin' my leg. **I can't see how anyone could take this "James Bond" game seriously.** Now if Nintendo is positioning it as a kid's game, I can totally see where they're coming from—I would probably give the game a 6.5. Of course, I'm sure this James Bond title is for the mass-market and not just for kids. In this case...well, you see my score. Why am I being so hard on it? How can I not be?! First, this Game Boy title could be any action/adventure game—it just so happens that it's called *James Bond 007*. Sure, the cart has some 007 tunes and lots of snappy Bond-inspired sayings, but other than that it could be any generic game. Next we have the mini-adventures our SECRET AGENT goes on, like retrieving a hammer for a guy who's fixing a bridge, and a pad of paper for another guy who makes a fake pass for James. Maybe the game takes place when James Bond first started with the Special Branch, and he needed to work his way up the Secret Agent ladder. Any good points, you ask? The interface is super easy to use, and the "save at any point" feature is awesome. Of course, this same save feature makes the game even easier than it already is. Funny how this works: GoldenEye is the perfect way to use a Bond license, whereas this little jobbie is the absolute worst way. **Shawn**

I absolutely, positively cannot recommend this game to anyone. I can list about 50 more Game Boy titles I'd rather play than this simplistic, moronic, sorry excuse for a game. The "action" is repetitive, the dialogue is ridiculous, the clues are overly simplistic ("Boy, I sure wish I had a [insert next clue here]..."), and the secrets are obscure. Damn, the cart isn't even big enough to act as a doorstop or a coaster. **What a waste of silicon.** **Dan**

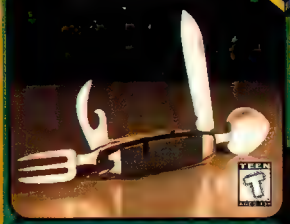
This is one of the worst uses of a movie license I've seen. 007 is a simple, straightforward Action/RPG that makes James Bond complete tasks such as finding a hammer so someone can build a bridge in China, whack jungle weeds, and search everyone's homes for medi kits. I'm surprised they don't have him wash dishes to pay for business expenses. Only get this game if you've played every other good Game Boy Action/RPG. **Kraig**

Bond for GB comes across to me as sort of a wanna-be Meta. Gear, only stripped down, extremely straightforward, and of course, with Bond characters. The RPG-ish elements of the game are appealing, but **the execution just isn't there.** Rather than offering distinctive challenges, Bond just offers up more of the same "search everywhere, find key stuff, move on" play mechanics that get old very quickly. Not horrid, but not a keeper. **John**

www.nintendo.com

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	LIFE
4	5	2	2

CAMPER'S KNIFE



Publisher: 1-800-CAMPMOR

Developer: Coghlan's

Available For: Your Mouth

Number Of Players: 1-20

Best Feature: High-impact Molded Handles

Worst Feature: Chicks—Even Camper Chicks—Unimpressed

Science tells us that all we need for life to flourish are water, oxygen and a few friendly rays of solar energy. Well, the eggheads need to add the Camper's Knife to this list. After all—you gotta eat. And with this handy ultra-combo of a spoon, fork, knife and bottle opener, you can eat anywhere and anything (except scorpions. Too tangy). I spent three days using nothing but this gizmo godsend, and—although it never once came close to saving my life—**I declare the Camper's Knife an indispensable tool for the progress of humanity.** Here's a for instance: After a snowstorm killed the power in my apartment complex, I used the gadget's spoon extension to eat snow from my balcony. Then I thought now much better the snow would taste if it were flavored. Then I went to 7-11 and bought a Slurpee. Oh, and there was the time I struck out into the wilderness (more of a vacant lot, really) behind our offices with nothing but my camper's knife and wits to survive the elements. Fifteen minutes later, I returned to the office shaken but triumphantly unscathed. The tool's sole drawback: No matter how deftly I wield it at the food court, it fails to impress the local mall chicks. If only the Camper's Knife came with an attachment that could increase its user's sex appeal. How about that one, science? **Crispin**

Now I'm no board-certified connoisseur of Swiss Army-like eating utensils, but **this heavy-duty contraption scores pretty high on the fancy meter.** Very rarely is fold-out silverware this sturdy or useable as this gem is, and to think it even includes a working spoon! If you're into eating on the go, or just want to look like a tough guy to impress the women, I strongly recommend checking out this piece of hardware. **Kraig**

I don't understand how this thing works. I put it in my PlayStation, but all it did was skip around and stutter. I put it in my N64, and everything went blurry. I put it in my Saturn, and no one wanted to make pocket dinnerware tools anymore. 'Tis a mysterious little gadget indeed. Maybe I'll have better luck with it when the next generation of systems arrives in our offices. If I'm lucky, Project X will show me a use for this silly thing. **Dan**

It's about time we finally got a product like this. The camper's knife not only freed me from numerous bear traps, it also helped me pick up a few chicks last weekend. On top of this, it was great when used for eating. Be aware that it works better with cereals and sliced sausages than it does with fajitas and rice dishes. The little bugger is durable, too! I dropped it in my toilet three times and it still worked. Was I supposed to wash it? **Shawn**

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MSRP	DESIGN
$12.99	7

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TOP 10

EDITORS' PICKS OF THE MONTH

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

April 1998

OVERALL

1	—	Winter Heat	
2	2	Resident Evil 2	
3	—	Gex: Enter the Gecko	
4	2	Point Blank	
5	—	Tactics Ogre	
6	—	Mystical Ninja	
7	2	Final Fantasy Tactics	
8	2	Snowboard Kids	
9	7	GoldenEye 007	
10	4	SF Collection (PlayStation, Saturn) Capcom	

PLAYSTATION

1	2	Resident Evil 2	
2	—	Gex: Enter the Gecko	
3	2	Point Blank	
4	—	Tactics Ogre	
5	2	Final Fantasy Tactics	
6	4	SF EX Plus α	
7	2	Klonoa	
8	—	Madden NFL 98	
9	3	NBA Live 98	
10	—	Tekken 2	

SATURN

1	—	Winter Heat	
2	4	SF Collection	
3	3	Last Bronx	
4	3	Steep Slope Sliders	
5	6	Saturn Bomberman	
6	—	DecAthlete	
7	3	Enemy Zero	
8	3	Sonic R	
9	6	Marvel Super Heroes	
10	—	Duke Nukem 3D	

NINTENDO 64

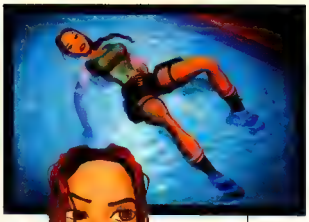
1	—	Mystical Ninja	
2	2	Snowboard Kids	
3	7	GoldenEye 007	
4	5	Diddy Kong Racing	
5	—	Quake 64	
6	4	FIFA: RTWC 98	
7	2	Fighters Destiny	
8	4	Duke Nukem 64	
9	—	NHL Breakaway '98	
10	14	Mario Kart 64 (Nintendo)	

HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

5 5 Name of Game (Publisher's Name)

- Editors' Choice Award
- # Consecutive Months On The Chart
- Rank Number

We give you Lara Croft's whole story!



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- *This special publication takes you deeper into the world of the digital heroine more than anything else before it. We offer huge and easy-to-use strategy sections to Tomb Raider and Tomb Raider II, in addition to a revealing look at the woman who personifies video games this year, Lara Croft!*
- *We went to England to visit Lara's creators at Core Design to get the inside and final word on her creation and meteoric rise to the top!*
- *Find out what the future has in store for Lara and ponder as we did who could play her IF Hollywood decides the world needs a Tomb Raider movie starring Lara Croft.*
- *Get the inside word from the witch doctors at 3DFX about the upcoming Voodoo^2 PC accelerator card. Read what they have to say about Lara and her rise to fame on the PC.*

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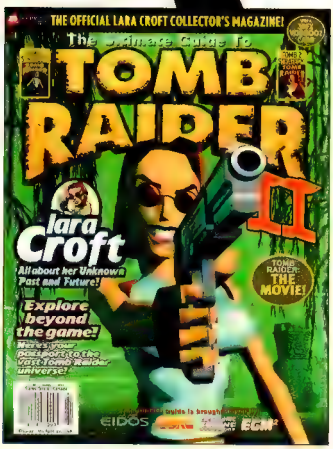

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NFL Blitz

By Arcade Editor Mark Hain

NFL Blitz is essentially NFL Jam. We're talking 7-on-7 football where 30 yards will get you a first down and you can body slam a tackled opponent. It seems like an easy game to play, and it is to a point. However, you'll find a good defense is the best offense. If you can stop your opponent from scoring even once, it will force a comeback situation that's not easy to beat.

It is pretty easy to score a touchdown in NFL Blitz. You just have to remember some important rules (or lack thereof). This football game has no Pass Interference, nor any out of bounds. Passes seem to be more effective than running plays as they can cover a huge amount of yardage. Don't count out rushing. A stiff-arm or a spin can be what you need for a quick six points. If you spin too much, though, it might cause a fumble.

See future issues for more arcade strategies

EGM²

If on offense, try short passes then rushing moves to evade tacklers.
If on defense, try to anticipate your opponent's offense: Run or Pass.

1 Codes

Right now there are almost 30 codes found. To enter a code, press the required button the number of times stated: Turbo (WHT), Jump (BLU), Pass (RED). The letter to the right of the three numbers is the direction you have to push the joystick to actually enter the code (Up, Down, Left, Right). A * next to the name means the code only works on a 1.21 version of the game.

SHOW MORE FIELD (wide camera)
0, 1, 2 D
HUGE HEAD
0, 4, 0 U
BIG BALL
0, 5, 0 R
NO FIRST DOWNS
2, 1, 0 U
BIG PLAYERS
1, 4, 1 R
TINY PLAYERS
3, 1, 0 R
NO PUNTING
1, 5, 1 U
SUPER FIELD GOALS (from 80+ yds!)
1, 2, 3 L
NO INTERCEPTIONS (both must enter)
3, 4, 4 U
STEPPING OUT ALLOWED (of bounds)
2, 1, 1 L
*FOG ON (looks perfect) **
0, 3, 0 D
*UNBEATABLE DRONES (just hard) **
3, 1, 4 D

Coaching Tips

QB Jump Pass

To run away from blitzing defenders, hit Turbo and Jump. While in the air, choose a receiver and press the Pass button—it helps the QB to avoid sacks (plus there are no penalties, so no intentional grounding to worry about)!

2

Spin Move

Quickly tap the Turbo button to perform a spin move. Spin moves cause the defender to miss his tackle. Watch it though—your Turbo Meter can't be empty.

Stiff Arm

While carrying the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, hold Turbo, then press the Pass button. This will knock down a would-be tackler.

Push Downs

When on defense, hold Turbo and press the Change Player button to knock down your opponent—meant to knock a receiver down before he gets the pass (remember, NO PENALTIES).

Strong Tackle

Hold Turbo and press the Tackle button to perform an aggressive tackle. Strong tackles will cause more fumbles to happen.

Onside Kick

After any score, press Up on the stick and press all three buttons. This will cause the kicking team to perform a dangerous onside kick.

3 Offense

Stiff-arm

When running downfield with the ball and a single defender is closing in, run right at him and stiff-arm him onto the turf. This will usually open up a hole and allow at least a 10-yard gain.

Advancing down the field

The deep pass is mostly a desperation move. It is far too easy to fumble or intercept. Instead, try throwing short passes, then use spin moves and stiff-arms for yardage. However, always remember that too much spinning can lead to fumbles as well.

Good plays

Use the Backsplit play to dish the ball off to the side in the event of a blitz. This still leaves two men open to the sides to pass the ball to.

Working with receivers

As previously stated, there are a couple things you can do to change up your offense. Before the snap, push the stick left or right to reposition one receiver. Often this confuses the defense and creates holes. On top of that, when you press Turbo+A+B, the man in motion becomes an extra blocker. This can be extremely helpful in blitzing situations so guard the quarterback. Lastly, you can use the man in motion to back up your intended receiver. This gives multiple targets to throw to and is especially helpful when your receivers are well-covered.

Other ways to punch it in

When on offense near the goal line, try to go up and over the line of scrimmage by hitting Turbo + Pass. To dive forward and try for that extra yard at any time, hold Turbo and double tap Jump.

Hidden Cursor

Push the stick up twice on the Play Select Screen to hide your cursor. This keeps your opponent from seeing which play you pick.

Swat Ball

When on defense, and the ball is in the air, the Jump button will cause your man to jump up and swat the ball down into the ground.

Spin Fumbles

If a player performs multiple spins during one play, he is more likely to fumble when he gets tackled.

Lateral Ball

When carrying the ball and a teammate is near, press the Pass button to lateral the ball to him. Works downfield as well!

Stop Clock

When carrying the ball, jump out of bounds (just like in real football) to stop the clock. You cannot just run out of bounds (except with the code).

4 Defense

Tricks of the Trade

Trickman Terry eagerly waits to thaw his brain!

As the showers and spring weather begin to thaw out the rest of the world, Trickman Terry's brain remains frozen. It will take some warmer days to get Terry back to normal (whatever that is). Still, April is one of the Trickmeister's favorite months. First, there's April Fools' Day, which Terry loves; but only a fool would try to trick the Trickman! Also, it's his birthday this month. Can you figure out the day? One gift that he wants from his loyal readers more than anything, is a huge batch of new tricks. We think he just wants an excuse to frolic and play in the mail bin again. Anyway, you can give Terry a big ol' grin by sending in a gift of the best of your newest tricks, codes and cheats to this address:

Tricks of the Trade
1920 Highland Avenue, #222
Lombard, IL 60148
or send e-mail to:
tricks@zd.com

Win Games and Accessories for your Tricks!

If your trick is selected as the Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by the kind people at InterAct. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. Gaze at the tiny text below, so you can get all the details on the free stuff.

NOTE: If you send your trick by e-mail you must include your real name, address, city, state and zip code.

Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard size postcard with your best trick, tip or code for any video game to "Tricks of the Trade," 1920 Highland Avenue, Suite 222, Lombard, IL 60148, or make your entry via e-mail to tricks@zd.com. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Entries must be received by April 30, 1998. All entries become exclusive property of Sponsors and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, late or misdirected entries. Void where prohibited, taxed or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply. One prize per family or household per issue. Winning entries may be printed in EGM and/or EGM². However, only one prize per household.
2. Prizes: For each of the winners, a copy of their name and trick displayed in the magazine and will receive a deep green cap (dig) sponsored by Sponsor. First Prize consists of one (1) GameShark Pro with a suggested retail value of $60.00. The best tricks submitted by the First Prize winners will be decided by the Editors of EGM and EGM². One Grand Prize winner will be awarded a trip to the First Prize awards, one (1) GameShark Pro and Grand Prize package with an approximate total value of $850.00. All winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all those entries received and shall be judged on the following criteria: originality – 25%; usefulness – 25%; clarity – 25%; and overall appeal – 25%. Judging to be held on or about April 25, 1998. All prizes will be awarded by mail. Prizes are non-transferable. No substitutions of prizes are allowed, except at the option of Sponsor should the featured prize become unavailable.
3. Odds of Winning: The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received.
4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the terms and conditions contained herein or misrepresentation of any prize may result in disqualification. All winners may be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility and a release (except where prohibited by law) which must be returned within 14 days of notification. Failure to do so may result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Employees of Ziff-Davis Inc., its subsidiaries, affiliates, InterAct Accessories and their respective advertising agencies and families of each are not eligible to enter. By accepting prizes, winners agree to allow Ziff-Davis Inc. and InterAct Accessories, their subsidiaries, affiliates, and their respective officers, directors, employees and agents (collectively, "Releasees") to use winner's name, likeness, photograph, voice, opinions and/or hometown and state for publicity purposes in any media now or hereafter known without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Releasees will not be responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that may occur in connection with participation in this contest or receipt or use of any prize. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that Ziff-Davis Inc., InterAct Accessories and their respective agents, reps, execs and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession or use of the prizes.
5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winner is to be listed to: Contest Winners, 1920 Highland Avenue, Suite 222, Lombard, IL 60148. Requests for winners' lists must be received by the 15th day of the month following the month in which the publication date of the publication. Allow four weeks for delivery of winners' list.
6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.
7. Sponsors: This contest is sponsored by Ziff-Davis Inc. and InterAct Accessories Inc. ©1998 Ziff-Davis Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA.

Trick of the Month

Jet Moto 2

ALL TRACKS, RACE AS ENIGMA

This trick is very long-winded, but it's worth it to enable all the tracks. From the Title Screen, go into the Options and put the Difficulty on Master and set the Laps Per Race to 5. Exit and go into the One-Player option. Choose Lil' Dave at the Select Rider Screen (Press X). Now press Triangle until you go back to the Title Screen. Press Up, Down, Left, Right, R2, R1, L2, L1 (this must be done quickly). Go back into Options and set the laps to 3. Go into the One-Player option again and choose Wild Ride (press X). Press Triangle until you're back to the Title Screen. Now press Up, Left, Down, Right, Square, R2, Circle, L2 (this must be done quickly). Go back into the Options again and set the Difficulty to Amateur and turn Turbo Off. Go in the One-Player option and pick Bomber. Go back to the Title Screen again and press R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2 (this must be done quickly). Now choose your racer and pick Single Track at the Choose Race Type Screen. You will see that all the tracks are available including the alternate tracks!

To race as the mysterious Enigma, go into the Options and set the Difficulty to Master and the Laps to 6. Go back to the Title Screen and press Left, Square, Down, Triangle, Right, Circle, L1, R1 (this must be done quickly). Enigma will now be on all tracks except the Select Rider Screen.

After doing the incredibly long code commands, begin a game.

At this screen, all the normal and alternate levels will be open!

Todd Kelley
Philadelphia, PA

Set the difficulty and laps to reveal the racer, Enigma!

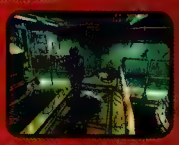
Resident Evil 2

SECRET CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

To get Hunk you must beat the second scenario with the best rating. When the rating comes up on the screen you will be able to save the scenario with Hunk as the character.

To get Tofu you must beat six scenarios in a row and get Hunk by the end of the first or second scenario.

To get the alternate costumes you must first go and kill the Brad Vickers zombie. To meet him you must play through most of the beginning without picking up a single item. Make your way all the way to the front of the police department. When you get to the gates of that place take the lower stairs around the front yard. There you will find the zombie. Once you encounter him you can try to kill him with what you have or go past, pick up some weapons and come back. Once you kill him, search the corpse and you will find a key. Take that key to the first floor of the police department and go to the west wing save point. In the room below the stairs you will find a locker that is locked. The key will open that and you will find your new costumes. For Claire you have one choice but get a new gun; Leon has two choices and he will fire faster.



Beat the game with the best rating and you can play as Hunk.

NFL Quarterback Club '98

MANY CHEAT CODES

[illegible] Enter Cheat Option. Now enter any of these codes for various results:

DOWNDRV - Player gets eight downs.

WILDSWZNGR - Increases attribute for all players to maximum.

DRDWYNMTN - [illegible] is set to maximum for all QBs.

ULTRPYTN - Ability attribute is set to maximum for all players.

SKLLWYS - Acceleration attribute is set to maximum for all players.

SMLMDGT - All player weights are reduced to 145 lbs and weights are not shown.

BLYTHMN - All player weights are 7'7" and weights are set to 145 lbs.

BBMNTBL - All players weights are 7'7" and weights are set to 145 lbs.

BSBFVFF - All offensive players have maximum attributes.

BSBFVDF - All defensive players have maximum attributes.

DTNHNDS - Players never fumbles the ball.

FWHYRMN - All player attributes are [illegible]

[illegible] increases to [illegible]

EPRTRBMD - All players run in Turbo Mode.

FRMBYFRM - Players move in slow motion.

TCKTCKLS - Tackle ball carrier is turned off.

SPRDPRTCKL - Maximum tackle.

TGHTGRP - No fumbles.

SPRTMMD - All player attributes are at maximum.

LDSTRTFRK - When QB throws the ball, it speeds to the receiver's hands.

INSTYNS - Discipline and awareness is set to maximum for all players.

BGTWSTRS - Ball carrier spins around constantly until he's tackled.

TRNTDLFR - QB accuracy is set to zero for all QBs.

LLDFSCK - All defensive attributes are set to zero.

LLFSCK - All offensive attributes are set to zero.

BGSPRDV - Show attendance is greater.

XPRBGRMS - [illegible] ball 100 yards; Kickers kick the ball 100 yards; Punters punt the ball 100 yards.

STNTXTM - Access to Acclaim, Iguana, AFC and NFC teams for quick play.

LFLDMD - Players do a [illegible]

PYSRSMN - [illegible] crawl around the field during play.

LWYSTPSS - Players always tip the ball on the ball on passes.

NLCTRCFB - Players move around like in [illegible] ball game.

SNWSLDS - Sled Dudes.

LLCHTSFF - Turns off all cheats that were [illegible]

Auto Destruct

CHEAT MENU

In the middle of your game, press Start to pause. At the Pause Menu, press Up, Down, Left, Right, Down, Right, L1, R1, R1. This will reveal the Cheat Menu. Now you can do these codes from the Cheat Menu unless otherwise noted:

Extra Nitros - L1, Circle, Down, L1, Up, Square, Circle, R1.

Extra Money - L1, R1, Up, Circle, Down, Square, Right, R1, L1.

Add 1 Minute to Time - Down, L1, L1, Circle, Circle, R1, Up, Square, L1.

Invulnerability - L1, L1, L1, L1, Left, Circle, Circle, Square, L1.

Infinite Fuel - L1, Circle, Left, L1, Circle, R1, L1, Up, R1, Down.

Car Tuneup Menu - L1, R1, L1, Up, Down, Circle, Down, Right, Left, Square, R1.

Car Select - In the Car Tuneup Menu press Left, R1, Right, R1, Left, R1, Right, R1.

Blood Mode - L1, Down, R1, Left, L1, Right, R1.

Angels - (works when Blood Mode is enabled) Up, R1, Down, L1, Up, Left, R1, Right, L1.

Choose Mission - Up, Down, Circle, L1, R1, L1, Circle, Down, Up.

Next Mission - Square, Circle, R1, L1, Circle, Down, L1, Up.

All Time Trials Available - R1, L1, Circle, Left, Circle, Circle, Left, L1, Circle.

New York Time Trial - Under the Main Menu's Time Trials option, press L1, Right, Down, Left, Up, R1.

Tokyo Time Trial - Under the Main Menu's Time Trials option, press L1, Left, Right, R1, Left, Right, L1.

The game is even more graphic with the blood and angel codes!

WCW Nitro

SECRET CHARACTERS, RINGS, ETC.

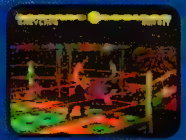
Hidden Characters: To get all of the secret characters start the game and go to the Title Screen. Once there press R1, R1, R1, R1, L1, L1, L1, L1, R2, R2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, and Select. If done correctly you will hear a noise.

Hidden Rings: This code will give you a couple new rings to play on. To start you must be on the Options Screen and have the ring option highlighted. Then press R1, R2, R1, R2 or L1, L2, L1, L2 and Select. This will scroll the ring over in a direction and eventually give you access to a new one.

Swelled Head: To make your fighter's head grow each time that you get hit or hit someone, press R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R2 and Select on the Character Selection Screen.

Big Head: To start the match with a big head press [illegible] L2 and Select on the Character Select Screen.

You will hear a sound after entering the code correctly.



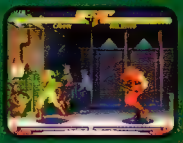
You will now have access to an incredible amount of wrestlers!

Street Fighter Collection

PLAY AS AKUMA AND CAMMY

To play as Akuma, pick Super Street Fighter II Turbo on Disc 1 and choose the Arcade or Versus Mode. Now highlight Ryu. Press and hold L1 and then immediately press R1. Akuma's shadow will appear. Cammy is hidden on Disc 2 of the collection. To get her you must first play through with M. Bison and get a first-place score. Enter your initials as CAM. She will now be available for VS. and Training Mode only. To get her, highlight Bison and press Start twice on him.

In either Arcade or Versus Mode you can play as Akuma.



Enter your initials as CAM after beating the game with Bison.

Mortal Kombat Trilogy

QUESTION MARK MENU

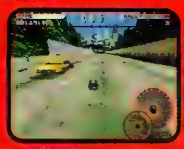
At the Main Menu Screen, choose Options. In the Options Menu, press Up, L, R, B. The screen will shake and you will now be able to move over and access the Question Mark. The menu contains One Button Fatalities, Instant Aggression and Low Damage options that you can turn on or off.

Test Drive 4

NITRO BOOST SMALL CARS

There are even more cars you can use from a Single Race game. You must race a track and get a course record (the Drag Race is the easiest). Then enter your

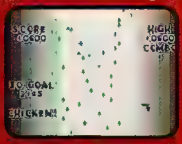
To get a nitro boost every time you honk your horn enter - WHOOOOSH
To get small RC cars enter - MJCJM.RC



Steep Slope Sliders

HIDDEN GAME

This trick will get you a hidden game called Steep Slope Sliders. To get this, go to the Title Screen and hold X, Y, Z, B, C, L button and R button. With these held, press Start. While still holding them, move down to the Options and press button A. In the Options, use the D-pad to highlight Exit and while still holding the designated buttons, press A. Now, Steep Slope Sliders will appear. Press A or C to start the game or B to exit. This is a silly game that will remind you of some of the first video game classics.



Avoid the trees and you'll eventually get a gun, suit and chicks!

GoldenEye 007

PLAY AS DIFFERENT BONDS

To do this trick, you must first have every one of the Cheat Options opened, but none of them activated. Now access the Aztec Stage and set the Difficulty to 007. On the Special Options Screen, set the Enemy options as follows: Enemy health -200%, Enemy damage - 100%, Enemy accuracy - 100%, Enemy reaction speed - 100%. You must beat the Aztec Stage in under nine minutes for this trick to work. Once you beat it, go back into the Cheat Options Menu and the last cheat: All Bonds (Multi) will be revealed! Turn this option to ON and then go into Multiplayer from the Menu Screen. Pick the "Characters" option. Scroll past the question mark characters to reveal the four new Bonds from all the previous movies!

Set up the Special Options Screen as shown to do the trick.

Beat Aztec, and the Cheat Options will reveal All Bonds!

In Multiplayer, go past the ? characters to see every Bond!

In a four-player game, you can pit all Bonds against each other!

Red Asphalt

SEVERAL AWESOME CHEATS

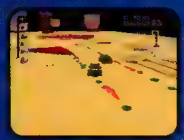
There are several codes that will give you some specials while in the game. Each must be entered in specific places while playing.
Enter these at the in-game Pause Menu:
Invincibility - Hold R1 and R2 and press Up, Left, Right, Down, Triangle, Square, Circle, X
Infinite Weapons - Hold R1 and R2 and press Left, Up, Right, Down, Square, Triangle, Circle, X
Unlimited Nitro - Hold R1 and R2 and press Down, Down, Down, Circle, Circle
Enter these codes at the Main Menu Screen:
Big Cars - Hold R2 and L2 and press Up, Up, Up, Square, Square
Play as Boss Cars - Hold down L2 and press Left, Right, Down, Up, Square, Circle, X, Triangle
Unlimited Cash - Hold L2 and R2 and press Left, Left, Right, Right, Square, Square, Circle, Circle
If these codes are entered correctly you will hear a sound to confirm it.

Now you can dominate the race by using the boss car!

Micro Machines V3

AWESOME DEBUG CHEATS

To get a Debug Mode in the game, pause and press Square, Up, Down, Down, Square, Circle, Circle, Triangle, X. Now you can do any of the cheats shown:
Blow up cars (including yourself) - Press X+Triangle+Circle+Square.
Make your car computer controlled - Press and hold Select and then press Square.
Change the zoom feature - Press and hold Select and then hold L2 or R2 to zoom in and out.
Change the angle feature - Press and hold Select and then press the D-pad in any direction to rotate the screen.
Quit the race and get first place - Press and hold Select and then press X (not in Time Trials).
Behind the car view - Press Start to pause and then press Left, Right, Square, Circle, Left, Right, Square, Circle.



To get a view behind the car, pause and do the trick as shown.

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EGM Shirts and Hats Shown Here May Vary Slightly From Ones Awarded

1. Entry: To enter, correctly answer four trivia questions and leave your name, address and phone number as instructed. Winners will be determined by judges whose decisions are final. One winner per household per month. Ziff-Davis assumes no responsibility for unintelligible, incomplete, or misdirected responses. 2. Prizes: Winners will receive one 1 of the following at Ziff-Davis' sole discretion: Game.com, Last Out, LightsOut, Light Wars, Brain Warp, or Ziff-Davis merchandise. Prizes have an approximate retail value of at least $15.00. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prizes are non-transferable. No substitutions of prizes are allowed, except at the option of Ziff-Davis should the featured prize become unavailable. 3. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States (void in Maryland). Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall return a signed affidavit of eligibility, release of liability/prize acceptance within 7 days in receipt of forfeit prize. Employees of Ziff-Davis Inc., Tiger Electronics, Inc. and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither Ziff-Davis, Tiger Electronics, nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions, or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes or expenses resulting from this contest. Winners acknowledge that Ziff-Davis has neither made nor is in any manner responsible or liable for any warranty or guarantee, whether express or implied, in fact or in law, relative to any prize including but not limited to its quality, mechanics, condition or fitness. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that Ziff-Davis, its agents, representatives, and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses, or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of the prizes. 4. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Preview Line Trivia Contest," 1920 Highland Avenue, Suite 222, Lombard, Illinois 60148. Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. 5. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

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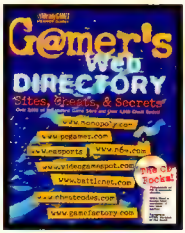
Cool stuff you could probably live without, but shouldn't

Chico and the Man

Not since the storming of the Bastille have the masses been so moved! The *EGM* offices were throwing feces with excitement when a little guy named Chico stopped by and said hello (that's right, the monkey actually spoke!). And although we didn't really buy the monkey (Bob's his owner), it was almost like we owned him. Yes, it was a great day for the staff of *EGM*—we laughed, we cried, we even diapered that little screamin' primate.

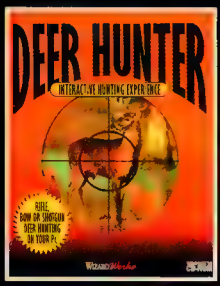
Price $150 an hour
For More Information www.master_of_chimps.com
Phone (800) PRI-MATES (leave off the "S" for savings)

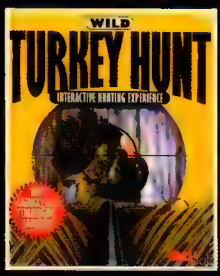


Gamers: Read This

For you Web junkies out there who also fancy yourselves hardcore gamers, then add this 272-page paperback to your library. *The G@mer's Web Directory* from Brady Games is a categorized and reviewed collection of Web sites that deal with gaming. From big-name company sites to cryptic fan sites, this book really has it all. Plus, the directory comes with a CD-ROM that has an HTML version of the book on it.

Price Around $20
For More Information www.bradygames.com
Phone (800) 858-7674





Down-Home Fun

When mowing down zombies and running over pedestrians on the consoles just doesn't seem to quench your hunger for destruction, it's time to take a ride over to your favorite software store and pick up Deer Hunter and Wild Turkey Hunt for your PC. These two titles, both by Sunstorm Interactive, claim to give you an "Interactive Hunting Experience" by putting you into the boots of a hunter, complete with weaponry and other tools of the trade. As strange as the wares may seem, they've been doing quite well. In fact, Deer Hunter made it into the top 10 of *PC Data*'s top-seller list earlier in the year. Go figure.

Price Around $20 each
For More Information www.888sunstorm.com
Phone (847) 714-8600

R2TapeToo

Spring is coming and it's time to start thinking about portable music. One possibility is Tiger's R2D2 which plays standard cassette tapes, along with four R2 noises from the movie. Tiger did a good job integrating the tape player stuff into the model, so it looks more like a collectable large-scale action figure instead of just a "walk-droid."

Price Around $30
For More Information www.tigertoys.com
Phone (847) 913-8100

EGM #103 correction: The correct number for Manga Ent. is (312)751-0020

Chico the monkey was not harmed in any way during the creation of this publication!

PlayStation

WIN! WIN! WIN!

PlayStation

1. No Purchase Necessary. To enter, send a postcard (no envelopes please) with your name, age, address, phone number and your answers to the following questions: Do you own a PlayStation game console? If so, how many games do you intend to buy this year? Send the postcard to "EGM-Blasto" Sweepstakes, c/o Linzee International, 1306 Old County Road, Belmont, CA 94002. Entries must be received no later than May 8, 1998. Sony Computer Entertainment America (the "Sponsor") is not responsible for lost, late, mutilated, illegible, incomplete or misdirected entries.
2. Prizes: One (1) Grand Prize winner will receive a Leather Blasto Letterman Jacket, a PlayStation game console, and a copy of the Blasto software title (approximate retail value of $485.00). One (1) First Prize winner will receive a Blasto T-shirt and a copy of the Blasto software title (approximate retail value of $70.00). Five (5) Second Prize winners will each receive a Blasto T-shirt and a PlayStation branded hat (approximate retail value of $35.00). Sponsor reserves the right to substitute prize of equal value if prize is unavailable. Prizes are non-transferable and no substitutions allowed.
3. Winners: Winners will be determined by a single random drawing of all valid entries received by the Sponsors, whose decisions are final. Drawing will be held on or about May 15, 1998. Winners shall be notified by mail and/or telephone.
4. Odds of Winning Sweepstakes: The odds of winning depends on number of valid entries received.
5. Eligibility: Promotion open to residents of United States only. Return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Winners may be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 7 days of receipt or forfeit prize. If the winner is a minor, then prize may be awarded to winner's parent or legal guardian. By acceptance of prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of the Sponsor and its parent and affiliated companies and their families are not eligible. Neither the Sponsor nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, division or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes or expenses that winners might incur as a result of this sweepstakes, or receipt of prize.
7. Winners List: To obtain a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "EGM - Blasto Sweepstakes Winners List," c/o Linzee International, 1306 Old County Road, Belmont, CA 94002. Requests for winners list must be received by May 29, 1998. Please allow four (4) weeks for delivery of winners list.
8. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law.

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PlayStation

www.playstation.com

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EGM: ed

by Ed Semrad
ed_semrad@zd.com

EGM's own gaming guru bids a fond farewell

The hardest question I had to ask myself was, "Why leave?"

There's an old expression that states all good things must come to an end. It's one of those things that a person never really thinks about until they are ready to make a change. And in my case, after several months of deliberation, I have decided to move on and explore other career options.

It's been an exciting eight years, and as I reminisce I realize that this was a dream job. Where else could a person get paid to play games and travel to dozens of exotic countries? The hardest question I had to ask myself was, "Why leave?" That's what took the longest to explain.

I believe it all boils down to goals, and how they change as time goes by. You accomplish some of the things you want to do and then add new challenges. In my case I am a "doing" kind of person who thrives on things that haven't been done yet. That is what the past eight years have been all about.

When I joined Sendai I was coming from a very boring job of writing technical documents, and I wanted to broaden my journalism career into the consumer-magazine market. I had a hobby that I loved (games) and thought, "What would be better than a brand-new game magazine?"

The early years were fun but very challenging. Each issue presented new problems to overcome, as desktop publishing and screen-grab boards were still only a dream. Screenshots were taken the old-fashioned way—with video tape and 35mm photographs. Those were also the days when the fate of the entire magazine hinged on whether a fragile SyQuest disk could be read by the prepress company. One read error and whole sections of the magazine had to be redone. Still, when you're dealing with your personal goals, nothing can't be overcome.

After *EGM* became established, the next goal was to expand into other magazines. *Mega Play*, *Super NES Buyer's Guide* and *EGM²* were our most famous spin-offs, but how many players remember *Super Gaming* or *Turbo Force*?

In our quest to always get the news first, I was able to accomplish another of my goals—world travel. Perhaps it's the gypsy in me, but I really enjoyed the challenge of going to a trade show in a foreign country and coming back with the first information on a new system or game. Now, after about 100 trade shows in Tokyo, Singapore, Hong Kong and London, that goal has been fulfilled.

Jon and Joe at Ziff-Davis helped me get back into my first love—journalism—and as chief correspondent I was able to pick and choose the feature stories I wanted to work on. My final piece on worldwide gaming perhaps represents the best I've ever done. I got to travel around the world several times and interview game players in Russia, China and other countries. Look for this feature soon.

Now I believe it's time to move on. I've accomplished many of my goals in life here at Sendai/Ziff, and while it is very difficult to leave, there are still other things I feel I must do. I want to thank the great staff, both present and past, who made my job so easy; all of my friends in the industry with whom I thoroughly enjoyed working; to all the loyal readers who read our magazines; and especially to Steve, who gave me the opportunity to work at my dream job.

Goodbye sounds so final, and it's an old joke that no one in the game industry really ever leaves. So it's probably best just to say thanks for the memories.

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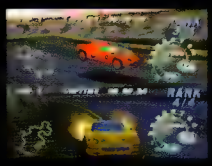
automobili Lamborghini



GRAND PRIZE-

A trip to the E3 Expo in Atlanta, GA (May 28 to May 30, 1998) with the Titus team, or a trip to the Lamborghini factory in Italy (date to be determined), including two days at the Lamborghini driving school, where the winner will drive several Lamborghinis.

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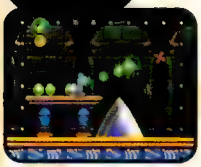
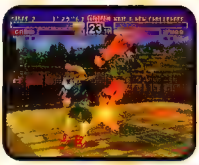
Titus will publish every two weeks on its Web site a release updating the contest ranking to keep the competition challenging(www.titusgames.com).

Next Month



Yoshi, former *EGM* coverboy and platform game hero, will finally be put through the paces.



How can anyone not like a fighting game with the lovely name "Bloody Roar?"

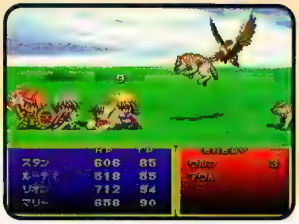
Remember the RPG feature we mentioned last month that was supposed to be in this month's issue? Well it's really gonna be here next month and this time we mean it!

Late features aside, plenty of new games are piling up, just waiting to be put into *EGM*'s May issue. Among them are previewable versions of Quest 64, Konami's Azure Dreams, HardBall 6 and Psygnosis' Psybadek.

Those waiting for their judgement day with the omnipotent Review Crew are Yoshi's Story, Diablo, Need For Speed III and Bloody Roar.

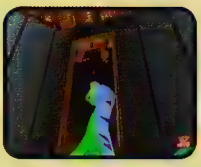
Electronic Gaming Monthly

May 1998



Alright, so the RPG feature was late. Think of it this way—we've had that much time to make it better by adding games such as Namco's Tales of Destiny.

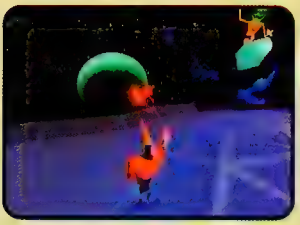
EGM²



The second part of our Gex: Enter the Gecko strategy reveals the locations of the toughest TV remotes to find.

The coolest fighter in recent years hits the PlayStation: Bloody Roar. We profile the most vital fighting tactics.

April 1998

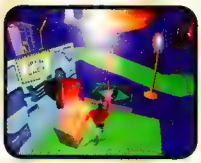


Blast off to the next level with Sony's hottest 3-D game, Blasto. We'll have the first full strategy so you can find all of Blasto's babes.

Yes, it might be the month of fools and pranksters, but the strategies we've got in store are definitely no joke.

It all kicks off with the witty-yet-intense 3-D adventure Blasto. This game has gotten all the hype, but is the gameplay there? You'll know for sure after checking out our first hands-on blowout. Other featured games include Gex: Enter the Gecko, Tactics Ogre, Skullmonkeys, Klonoa and much more.

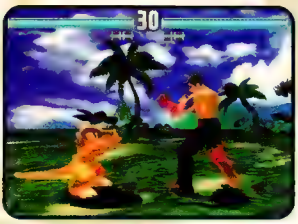
Finally, check out the start of something big: The largest, most complete tricks guide we've ever done. Why settle for just tricks and tips when you get it all in *EGM*²!



You got an eyeful of Dead or Alive in our March cover story, now play it yourself, along with Blasto, Gex 2 and others on our latest demo disc.

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

April 1998



OPM blows the lid off Tekken 3 in our first hands-on preview of Namco's latest iron-fisted fighter.

OPM is going all the way to Lake Tahoe, site of the ESPN Airwalk Freeride Championships, to bring you the latest on Psygnosis' offbeat new racer, Psybadek. Also, check out our first hands-on coverage of the "Death Star" of PlayStation fighters, Namco's stellar Tekken 3!

Find out how Crystal Dynamics' wise-crackin' gecko faired in our extensive review or play the game yourself on our demo disc. Also included are playable demos of Blasto, Dead or Alive, Running Wild, Jeremy McGrath's Super Motocross and TOCA plus videos of Tomba and MLB 99!

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Mystical Ninja 64
NBA in the Zone
Quest 64
Turok 2
Yoshi's Story

Import N64 Titles
Art of Fighting Twin
F Zero 64
Hybrid Heaven
Kirby's Air Ride
Legend of Zelda

U.S. Saturn Titles
Dead or Alive
Dungeons and Dragons
Magic Knight RayEarth
Ninja
Zero Divide Final Conflict

Import Saturn Titles
Barokku, Gal Act Heroism
The House of the Dead
Keriotosse, Loose
Princess Maker 2
Sakura Wars 2
Shining Force III - Senario 2
Super Adventure Rockman
Super Robot War F
Toki Meki Memorial Drama
Winning Post 3
World Soccer RPG

US PlayStation Titles
Bloody Roar
Breath of Fire III
Crime Killers
Dead or Alive
Need for Speed III
Newman/Haas Racing
Pitfall 3D
Point Blank
Power Boat Racing
Rascal
Redline
Resident Evil 2
Running Wild
Vigilante 8
WWF 98
WWF War Zone

Import PlayStation Titles
Ash to Ash
Crisis City
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Fighting Spirit
Gal Act Heroism
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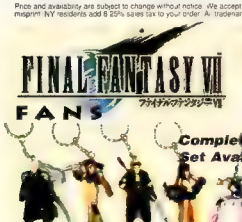

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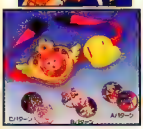

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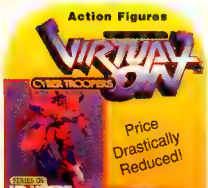

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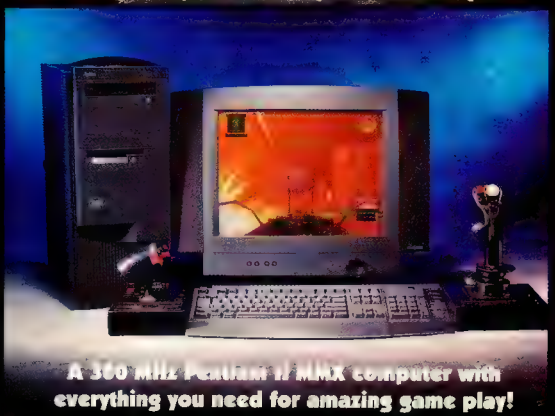

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Directions. Fill in the Mystery Word Grid with words going across that spell out the Mystery Word down the middle. Hint: use the Mystery Word Clue.

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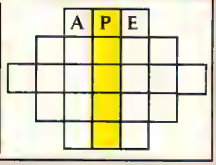

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Entries must be received by APRIL 15, 1998

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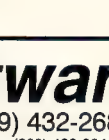

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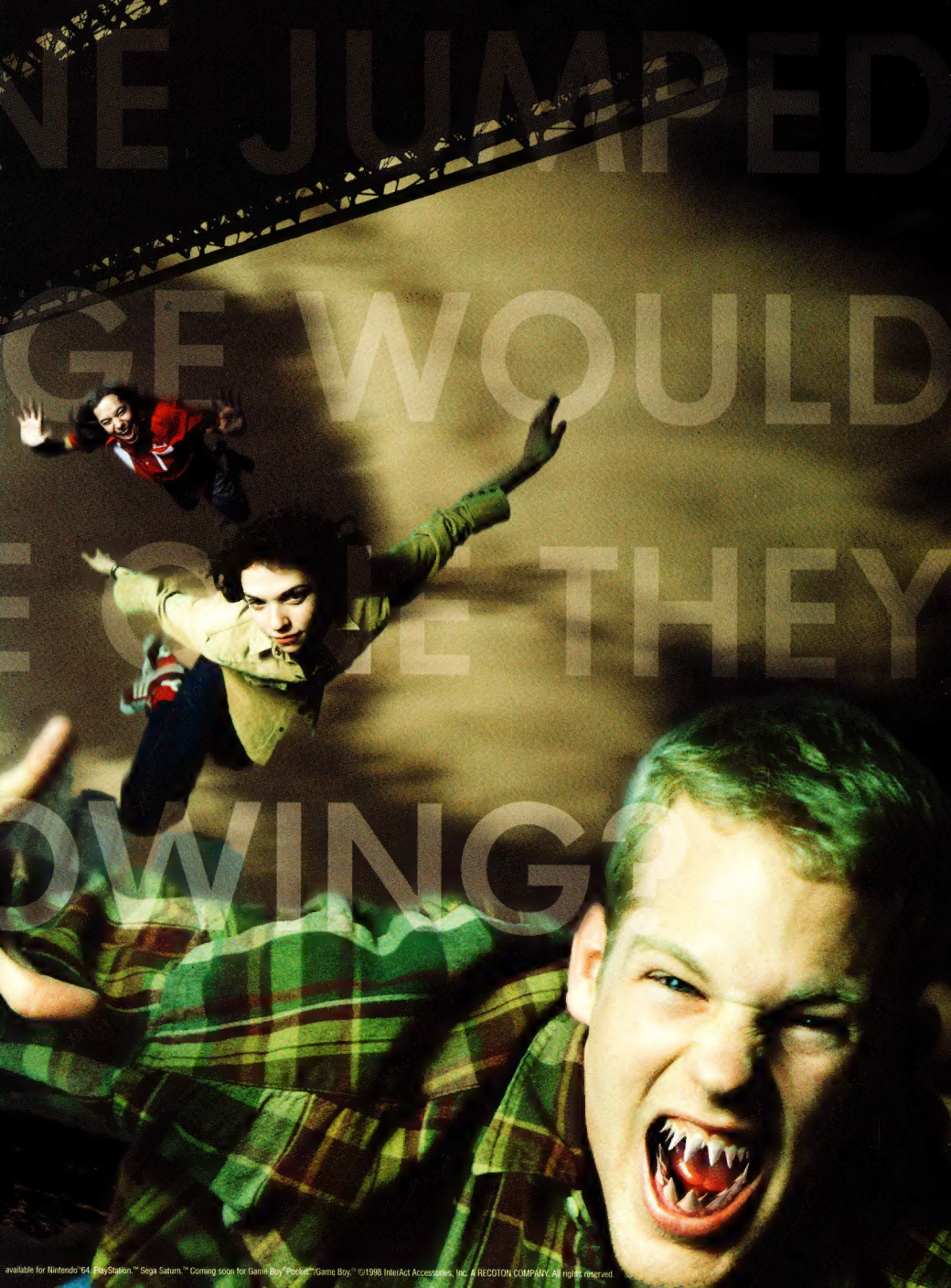

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